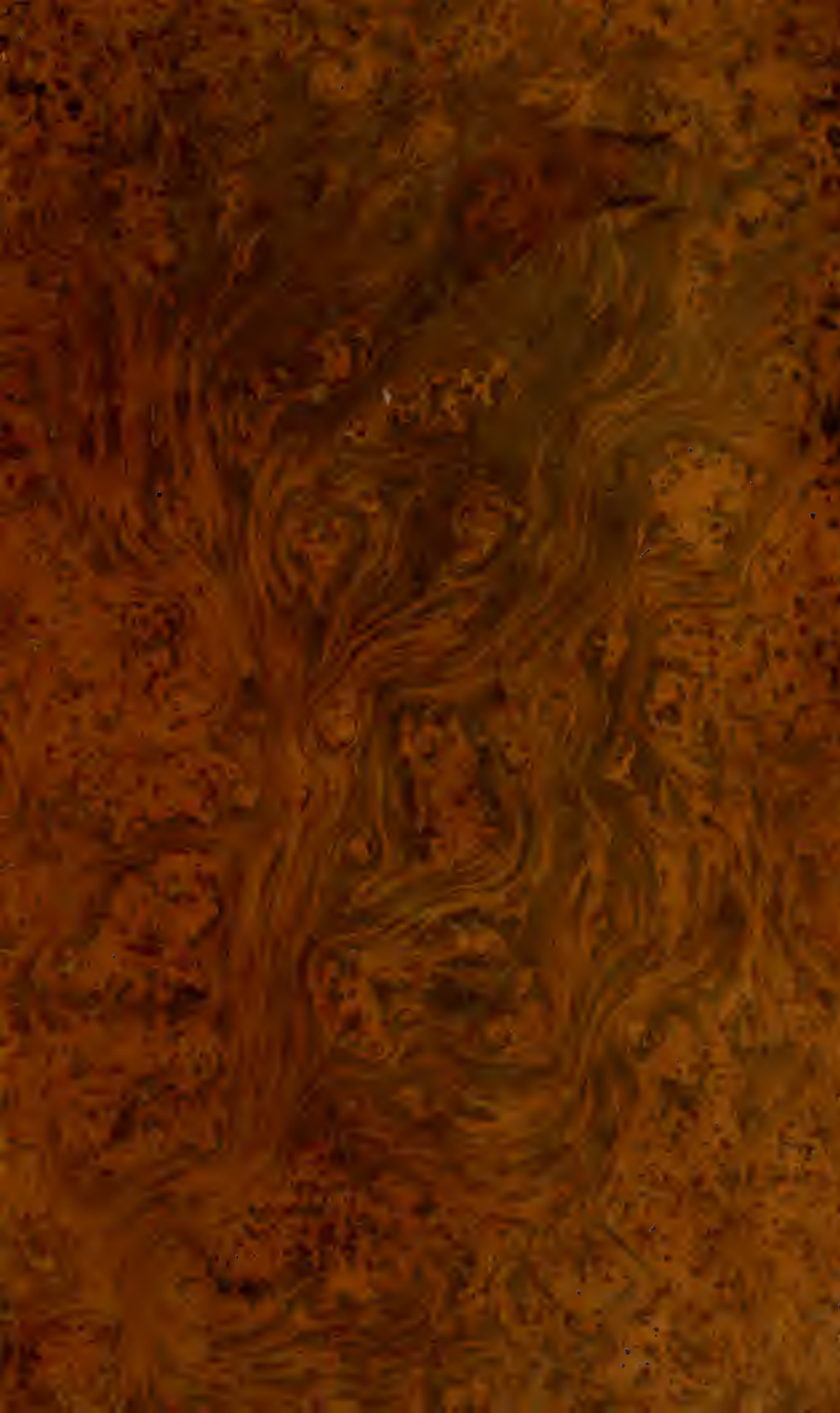
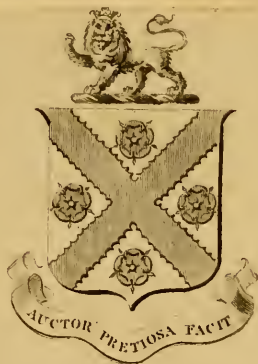




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* THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, *
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THE
CHRISTIAN LIFE.
WHEREIN THE
GREAT DUTIES
OF
JUSTICE,
MERCY,
AND
MORTIFICATION,
Are fully Explained and Enforced.

V O L. IV.

By *J O H N S C O T T*, D. D.
Late Rector of *St. Giles's in the Fields.*

The S I X T H E D I T I O N.

L O N D O N,

Printed for J. KNAPTON, C. HITCH and L. HAWES,
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T. LONGMAN, and C. WARE.

M D C C L V I I.

THE

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

OF THE

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

OF THE

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

OF THE

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

OF THE

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir *GEORGE TREBY*,
LORD CHIEF JUSTICE
OF THE
COMMON PLEAS.

My Lord,

THOSE Excellent Treatises of
Christian Life, which were published
some Years since by the
Learned *Author*, have, I doubt not, in
a great Measure, answered his Design
in Writing them, which was, to do as
much good as he could to the World;
and, had he lived to finish the other
Parts of it, we might have had such
a complete Body of Christian Institutions
in our own Language, as would
have highly contributed towards a Re-
vival

vival of true Piety among us. For, besides those Pieces which have already seen the Light, it was the *Author's* Design to proceed to a particular Explication of the several respective Duties, which Men are obliged to render to *God*, their *Neighbours*, and *Themselves*: And, for a Conclusion of all, he proposed a distinct Treatise of *Ecclesiastical Duties*.

The Two Discourses of *Justice* and *Mercy*, which I now present to your *Lordship*, were intended as a Part of that Duty which we owe to one another, and which, with other Enlargements, had the *Author* lived, would have made a Volume of themselves. And, the Discourse of *Mortification* is, likewise, a Part of what He designed for the Explication of that Duty which Man owes himself, which was also intended for another distinct Volume. Besides these, he proposed a particular Examination of those great Duties, which *God* requires; which, together with the other Volumes would have completed the whole Design. In Justice, therefore, to
the

the Memory of this *incomparable Person*, I thought myself obliged to communicate to your *Lordship* this short Account of him. The Design, which he proposed, was Great and Noble, and, I am sure, those *Pieces* which he hath already published, do loudly speak the Excellent Qualifications with which *God* had endowed him to complete it, had not a *laborious Station*, and, what was worse, a very *sickly Constitution* at last interrupted him from the Prosecution of it.

As for these *Remains*, they are faithfully transcribed from the *Author's Manuscript*; and your *Lordship* may easily discern, that they are his true, and genuine Off-spring, by your Perusal of them. I know, your *Lordship* hath a very high Value, and just Esteem, for the Memory of that *great, and good Man*, and, that is a prevailing Inducement, to take into your Protection, those Works which he has left behind him. To you, they address themselves, and, I doubt not, but under that *Character*, which your *Lordship* bears,

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they

they will be sufficiently recommended to the World; and that they may effectually promote the *Good* of it, is the hearty Prayer of

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient

Humble Servant,

J. GALE.

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O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N L I F E.

V O L. IV.

C H A P. I.

Of Justice, as it preserves the Natural Rights of Men: and particularly in reference to their Bodies.

HAVING, in a former Discourse asserted and explained the Nature of *Moral Good and Evil* in Human Actions: I shall now distinctly consider the Sum of all that *Moral Duty* which we owe to God, and to our Neighbour; as the Prophet hath comprised it in these Words, *He hath shewn thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* Mic. vi. 8. I begin with that Duty which God requires of us towards our Neighbour: and it is all implied in the two distinct Virtues of *Justice and Mercy*.

In discoursing of *Justice*, I shall endeavour these two Things: I. To shew what that Justice is which is required of us towards our Neighbour: II. To

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prove,

prove, that it is grounded upon such immutable Reasons, as do render it a *Moral Good*.

I. I shall endeavour to shew, what that Justice is which is owing to our Neighbour. In general therefore, *Justice* consists in giving to every one his Due; in which Latitude it comprehends all Matter of Duty: for every Duty is a Due to God, or our *Neighbour*, or our *Selves*, and accordingly every Performance of every Duty is a Payment of some Due; and, as such, is an Act of *Righteousness*. And therefore in Scripture Good Men are frequently styled *Righteous*, and the Whole of Virtue and Goodness is called *Righteousness*, because it is a Payment of some Due either to God, our *Selves*, or our *Neighbours*. But *Justice* being here considered as a *distinct* and *particular Virtue*, must be understood in a more limited Sense, *viz.* for Honestly in all our Dealings with Men, or giving to every Man his Due, with whom we have any Intercourse; and wherein this consists, will best appear by considering what those Things are, which are due from one Man to another, or what those Dues and Rights are which Men may claim by the *Eternal Laws* of Righteousness. And these are twofold. 1. Natural; and 2. Acquired.

I begin with the first, *viz.* the Natural Rights of Men, which are such as appertain to Men, as they are *Reasonable Creatures*, and dwelling in Mortal Bodies, and joined to one another by their Natural Relations, and by Society. For in all these Capacities, there accrue to Men certain *Natural Rights* which we are obliged in Justice *not to violate*, but, so far as we can, to *secure and make good* to one another.

First,

First, Therefore we will consider Men as dwelling in *Mortal Bodies*;

Secondly, As *Rational Creatures*;

Thirdly, As joined to one another by *Natural Relations*;

Fourthly, As naturally united in *Society*; and I will shew what Rights there are redounding to them from all these Respects and Considerations.

First, We will consider Men as dwelling in *Mortal Bodies*, in which there is a twofold Right accruing to them: 1. a Right to their *Bodies*: 2. a Right to their *Bodily Subsistence*.

1. As dwelling in *Mortal Bodies*, they have a Natural Right to their *Bodies*, and to all the *Parts* of them; for their Bodies being the *Tenements* which the great Landlord of the World hath allotted to their *Souls*, during their abode in this terrestrial State, are, upon that Account, their undoubted Right; which, unless they forfeit, they cannot be deprived of without manifest *Injury* and *Injustice*. for if *God* gave this *Body* to my *Soul*, it is certain, that immediately under him my *Soul* hath a Right to it, and holding *in Capite* as it doth from the Supreme Proprietor, is Tenant at will to none but him, for this its earthly Habitation: so that *antecedently* to all Human Laws and Constitutions, every *Soul* is vested with a Natural Right to its own *Body*; as being placed in and put in Possession of it by the God of Nature; and till by its own free Act it hath *alienated*, or *forfeited* its Right, there is none but God, (who hath reserved to himself the *sovereign* and *absolute* Disposal of it) can justly either dispossess a Soul of its *Body*, or of any *Part* or *Member* of it, or offer any Violence to the Body, or put it any

farther out of its Soul's Disposal, than God himself hath done by placing it under the outward Restraints of *Government*. So that for any one either to kill or dismember a Body, whose Soul hath not *forfeited* its Right to it; to enslave or imprison a Body, whose Soul hath neither alienated, nor forfeited its Right to dispose of it, is a Piece of high and crying *Injustice*. In short, God hath placed the *Immortal Soul* of Man in the Tenement of a *Mortal Body*, in which it hath thereupon the Right of a Tenant at Will, that holds at the Pleasure of his Landlord; by whom it is impowered to enjoy it for its own Habitation, to defend it against outward Violence, and dispose of it for its own Needs and Conveniencies. So that unless he be impowered by *God*, there is no *Man* can rightfully destroy or dismember, or, without his Consent, enslave or imprison another Man's Body; unless it be in Defence of his own Life, or Livelihood, or Liberty, which every Man hath a natural Right to defend. But then since for the common Good and Defence of all, God hath placed his *reserved Authority* over our Bodies in the Hands of *human Government*, it is no Violation of the Right of our Souls, for the *Government* under which we are placed, to destroy or dismember, enslave or imprison our Bodies, whenever by offending others, we render it *necessary* for the *Defence* and *Good of all*. And since the *Government* hath, so far as the Common-weal requires, *God's* own *Authority* over our Bodies in its Hands; it is no more injurious to our Souls, for *That* to dispose of our Lives and Members, Livelihoods and Liberties, for the common Security and Good, than if God himself should do it immediately; since the Govern-

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ment doth it by *his Right* and *Authority*, which is *Paramount* to all the natural Rights of our Souls. But for any others either to take away the Life, or Members of another's Body, except it be necessary for their own Defence: or to enslave, or imprison another's Body, except it be upon free Consent, or just Forfeiture, is an outrageous Invasion of the natural Rights of human Souls.

2. As Men dwell in *Mortal Bodies*, they have also a Right to their *bodily Subsistence*. For, for God to give them a Tenant's Right in their Mortal Bodies would be very insignificant, unless we suppose he hath therewith given them some Right to those *outward Goods*, that are necessary to their *Maintenance* and *Subsistence*: For God being the Supreme Proprietor of this lower World, as well as of those Tenements of Flesh we live in; it must needs be supposed, that, as by placing our Soul in this Body, he hath given *her* a Right to it; so by placing our Body in this World, he hath given *it* a Right to such a Portion of this World's Goods, as are *necessary* to its *Repair* and *Maintenance*. And though in the unequal Division of the World, that now is, he hath given to some a larger Share of it than to others; yet it is not to be supposed he hath so appropriated *All* to some, as to leave nothing for all the rest. For as all Men are *equal* in their *natural Faculties* and *Indowments*, so according to *original Constitution* they were also equal in their *outward Properties* and *Possessions*; and all things being promiscuously exposed to the Use and Enjoyment of *All*, every one from the common Stock assumed as his own Right what he needed. And as for the *Inequality* and *private Interests* that are now among us,

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they were Ey-blows of our *Fall*; for it was Sin that introduced our Degrees and Distances, that devised the Names of *Rich* and *Poor*, begot Ingrossings and Inclosures of Things, and forged those two pestilent Words, *Meum* and *Tuum*, which have since ingendred so much Strife and Mischief in the World. And though God hath made these Inclosures *Rights* by his long and continued Permission of them, yet he hath not thereby parted with his own Right to them: He by an immutable Right is still *Paramount* of all his Creation, and every thing in it unalienably belongs to him. And as for those *inclosed Properties*, with which he hath vested us in such unequal Proportions, he hath committed them to us as *Stewards*, and not transferred them upon us as *Masters*; and so without any Injury to us, may appropriate what *Part* of them he pleases to what *Use* he pleases: which when he hath done, we cannot without manifest Injustice otherwise dispose of that *appropriate Part*, than to the Use and Service for which *he* hath appointed it. Now out of every Man's Estate and Property he hath actually reserved some *appropriate* Portion to be disposed of to the Poor and Needy, who having nothing else to subsist by; and in this Part of our Estates the *Poor* have the same Right from *God*, that we have in all the other Parts of it. So that this World being now cantoned out so very unequally among Men, yet according to *God's Allotment* every Man hath Right to such a Share of it, as is at least sufficient to keep him from being starved, or pinched with *Extremity* of Need; and in this Method God hath assigned to every Man a *Child's Portion*, which in some fair Way or other ought to be obtained, *viz.*
either

either by *legal Right*, or by *humble Request*; which Latter, in Conscience, ought to take effect, as well as the Former. For now according to this latter Constitution he hath appointed the *Rich* to be his Stewards and Treasurers for the *Poor*; with a strict Charge that they dispense to every one *his Meat in due Season*. The *Honour* of distributing is conferred on the Former, as a Tryal of their Fidelity and Bounty; the *Right* of receiving is conferred on the Latter, as a Tryal of their Patience and Gratitude; and thus God hath wisely projected, that all his Children should be both effectually, and quietly provided for; that one Man's *Abundance* should *supply* another's *Wants*, that so there might be an *Equality*, as *St. Paul* expresses it, 2 *Cor.* viii. 14. For since no Man can enjoy *more* than he needs, and every Man ought to have *so much* as he needs, there could be no *great* Inequality among Men if things were administered according to the Institution of God. But if out of our abundance we refuse to relieve the poor Man's Necessities, we are unjust both to God and him; to God, because we misapply his Goods, and cross his Orders; to him, because we wrongfully usurp, and detain from him the Portion which God hath allowed him; and so under a Vizard of Right and Possession, we are no better than Robbers in the Account of God; when by refusing to relieve our Brother's Necessities we spoil him of his Goods; *his Goods*, I say, by the very same Title that any thing is ours, even by the free Donation of God. It is the *hungry* Man's Bread which we hoard up in our Barns, his Meat that we glut, and *his* Drink that we guzzle: it is the *naked* Man's Apparel that we shut up in our Presses, and do so ex-

orbitantly ruffle and flaunt in; and what we *deny* out of our Abundance to an *Object* of real *Pity*, and *Charity*, is in the Account of God an unjust *Usurpation* of his Right. For by the Institution of God, I *owe* every Man this *Right*: not to see him pine, and perish for Want, whilst I surfeit, and swim in Plenty. And thus you see what Rights appertain to a Man in his first Capacity, *viz.* as inhabiting a *Mortal Body*.

C H A P. II.

Of Justice in preserving the Rights of Men, considered as Rational Creatures.

Secondly, **I** Proceed in the *second* Place to observe, That there are other Rights accruing to Men, as they are *Rational Creatures*: For it is this indeed that gives a Right to common Justice, to be governed by *Laws*, and by Rewards and Punishments, that we are free and Rational Agents who can *chuse* or *refuse*, and determine ourselves which way soever we think fit or reasonable. For without *Reason*, and *Free Will*, we could no more be capable of *Laws*, nor subject to Rewards and Punishments than *Stones* or *Trees* are: For no *Law* can oblige a Being that hath no *Power* over his own *Actions*; nor can he deserve to be rewarded when he doth *Well*, nor punished when he doth *Evil*, if it be not in his *Power* to do otherwise; and therefore *Beasts* cannot be said to do either *justly* or *unjustly* towards

towards one another; because whatsoever *Good* or *Evil* they do one another, they do it *necessarily*, and it was not in their Power to do otherwise. But because Men are *free Agents*, and have Power to determine themselves either to do *Good* or *Evil* to one another; therefore of Right they claim of each other the *mutual* Performance of such *Goods*, and Forbearance of such *Evils*, as agree or disagree with the State and Condition of their Natures. And hence every Rational Creature hath a *Right* to be used and treated by those of his own Kind, agreeably to the State of his Rational Nature; and for one Man to treat another otherwise, is not only *hurtful*, but also *injurious*. Now the Rights which one Rational Creature may by the Condition of his Nature claim of another, may be reduced to these four Particulars;

1. Every Man hath a Right to an *equitable Treatment* from every Man.

2. Every Man hath a Right to *judge* for himself so far as he is capable.

3. Every Man hath a Right not to be *forced*, or *impelled* to *act* contrary to the Judgment of right Reason.

4. Every Man hath a Right to be *respected* by every Man according to the Dignity of his Nature.

1. Every Man hath a Right to an *equitable Treatment* from every Man, that is, to be treated according to the Measures of that Golden Rule of Equity prescribed by our Saviour, *Matth. vii. 12: Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets, i. e.* In all your Intercourses
with

with Men, suppose you had exchanged Conditions with them, and that you were in theirs, and they in yours; and be sure you do them all that good, which, upon a due Consideration of the Case, you could reasonably expect, or desire of them, if you were in their Persons and Circumstances. And this Right of being treated by others, as they would expect to be treated by us, supposing they were in our Circumstances, arises from that *Equality* of Nature that is between us, which gives every one a Right to be equally treated by every one, and to claim all those good Offices from others which they might reasonably claim of him, if they were in his State and Circumstances. For we being all propagated from the *same* Loins, and Partakers of the *same* Nature, every Man in the World is by Cognition of Blood, and Agreement of Nature, every Man's *Brother* and *Kinsman*. We are all but so many several Streams issuing from one *common Source*; but so many several Twigs sprouting from the *same Stock*; we are all of us but *one Blood* derived through several Channels; but *one Substance*, multiplied and dilated into several Times and Places, by the miraculous Efficacy of the divine Benediction. We are all fashioned according to the same *Original Idea*, resembling God our common Father: we are all endowed with the same Faculties, Inclinations, and Affections; and do all conspire in the same essential Ingredients of our Nature: and there is nothing doth distinguish, or diversify us, but what is *accidental* to our *Being*; such as Age and Place, Figure and Stature, Colour and Garb; so that every Man is not only our most lively *Image*, but in a Manner our very *Substance*, or *another* Ourselves,

Ourselves, under a small Variation of present Circumstance ; which Circumstances are to be considered in every Application of the above named Rule of *Equality* to our Actions. If I am *superior* to another, either in my Place, or Relation, or in the Goods of my Mind, or Fortune ; I am only obliged by this Rule, to do that by him which I might reasonably desire he should do by me, were he as much *my Superior*, as I am *his*. But when all Men *naturally* as such are equal, and do stand upon *even* Terms and level Ground, there ought to be no other Inequality in their mutual Treatment of one another, but what is owing to the Inequality of their Circumstances : and he who doth that to another Man, which upon good Reason he would not have another do to him in the same Circumstances, doth unjustly *usurp* a Superiority over him, which neither *Nature*, nor *Providence* allows of. For there is no Proposition in the Mathematicks more self-evident than this, *Paria paribus conveniunt*, equal Things agree to equal Persons ; and therefore since we are all equal by Nature, whatsoever things are due to *me*, must by the same Reason be due to *another* in the same Circumstances ; and therefore he that denies to another Man that which he conceives he might justly claim of him in the same Condition, unjustly withholds from him a Right that is due to him as he is his Equal in Nature.

II. Every Man hath a Right to *judge* for himself so far as he is capable : for we must either suppose that every *Being* hath a Right to *use* its own Faculties, or else that it hath its Faculties *in vain* : for to what Purpose serves its Faculties, if it hath no Right to make *Use* of them ? And to what Purpose serves

serves our Faculty of Reason, but only to *judge* for ourselves in all such Matters as fall within the Sphere of our Cognizance? Which if our Reason be debarred of, it stands for a lonely Cypher in our Natures, and is altogether *useless* and *insignificant*. And if in any thing our Reason hath a Right to *judge* for us, then much more in Matters of *Religion*, in which our highest and most important Interest is concerned. So that to deny it the Right of judging for us here, is to render it useless in our greatest Importance, and to disable our *best Faculty* from being serviceable to our *best Interest*. It is true there are sundry *Controversies* about religious Matters, which every Man's Reason cannot judge of; the Arguments *Pro* and *Con* depending either upon *Criticisms* of Language, or *Metaphysical* Niceties, or ancient *Histories*; which are all beyond the Comprehension of Persons of mean and vulgar Understandings: who are therefore obliged in all such Matters as these, to submit to the Determination of their *lawful Guides* and *Governors*. But as for the great and *necessary* Matters of Religion, they are plain and obvious to the meanest Understanding; and consequently herein every Man ought to exercise his natural Right of *judging* for himself, and not swallow his Religion blindfold, without trying it by the *Test* of his Reason. And certainly they who remove the Cognizance of Religion out of the Court of Reason, take away that which doth most properly and naturally fall under its Determination. For Religion is the *Chief End* of Man's Creation, as he is a reasonable Being, and thereby capable of Religion: and to be sure, where the *End* is natural, the *Means* must be so too. And therefore as Horſes
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that were made for Burthen, have a natural Ability to bear; and as Birds that were made to fly, have a Faculty and Wings for that Purpose; so rational Souls that were made for Religion, must needs be supposed to have some *Power* naturally placed in them, for the *Exercise*, and *Judgment*, and *Choice* of it. And what else can that be but their Reason? So that to deny Men the Liberty to judge for themselves in that which is their *natural End* and *highest Interest*, is as great a Piece of *Violence* and *Injustice* as can be offered to human Nature. And of this very matter the Church of *Rome* is highly guilty; for it commands *Assent* without Evidence; and imperiously requires Men to believe her Doctrines without Examination; to rely *implicitly* upon her Authority, and swallow down her Faith by the lump, without ever enquiring whether it be Physick, or Poison. For the leading Principle of the *Romish* Religion is this, that the Church's *Authority* is the *Reason* of our Faith, and that Men are bound to believe what she believes, without any further Proof or Evidence; by which tyrannical Procedure, she uses her wretched Children as the *Philistines* did *Sampson*, first puts out their Eyes, and then recreates herself with their Blindness and Ignorance. For unless they wink hard, and believe at a venture whatsoever she proposes, they are sure to feel the *Edges* both of her spiritual and temporal *Swords*; and though they are never so modest, peaceable, and humble in their Dissents, to incur her Anathema's, which have always the Sting of Fire and Faggot in the tail of them. Now what is this but to *force* the Opinions of Men, and *drive* their Reason from its Throne of Judicature? For he that
punishes

punishes a Man *barely* for his *Opinion*, doth in so doing endeavour to rob him of his natural Right of *judging* for himself: which is the greatest Tyranny in the World, it being an Exercise of Dominion over the Minds of Men, which are subject only to the Empire of God. It is true, if in judging for themselves Men take up Opinions that are *Vicious*, or *Destructive* to Government, their wicked Practice is justly punishable according to the Proportion of its Malignity; for otherwise Men's right of *judging* for themselves will soon be made a Sanctuary for all the Villains in the World. And though no Man ought to be punished *barely* for his *Opinion*, yet he may be justly punished for *practising* his *Opinion*, though his Practice be *indifferent* in its own Nature. For *indifferent* Things, which God hath neither commanded nor forbidden, are the proper Matter of all *human Laws*; and therefore if upon a false Opinion that what the Law enjoins is not *indifferent*, but *sinful*, I practise contrary to the Law, I am justly *punishable*; because my Mistake alters not the Nature of the Thing. If it be *indifferent*, it is a proper Object of human Laws, whether I think it so or no, and as such may justly be *imposed*; and the Imposition being just in itself, our not complying with it is justly punishable. Once more; though no Man ought to be punished for his *Opinion*, yet he may be justly punishable for making a publick *Profession* of it; for there is no doubt but Men may be restrained by Laws from *propagating* their little Opinions into Factions, and dividing themselves upon every different Persuasion into opposite Parties. Otherwise it will be impossible, considering the

Passions of Men, to maintain any *Unity* or *Concord* in civil or sacred Societies. And therefore where such Restriction is, Men ought to be satisfied with this, that they freely enjoy their Liberty of *Opinion*, and are not deprived of their natural Right to *judge* for themselves; and so they ought either to keep their little Opinions to themselves, or at least not to vex and disturb the *Publick* by a fierce Endeavour to propagate them to others. And this due Deference to Men's natural Right of *judging* for themselves, hath been always punctually observed in the Church of *England*; for it neither damns, nor censures, persecutes, nor destroys Men upon the Score of Difference in *Opinion*, provided their *Opinion* doth not lead them to *wicked*, or *seditious Practices*; but hopes well of all that live well, and receives all into its Communion that desire it; provided they believe but the Apostles Creed and the Doctrine of the four first General Councils. It is true, it forbids Men so to *profess* their Dissents to the Articles of its Doctrine and Discipline, as to *seducer* her Children from her Communion and list them into Factions against her; and this every Church must necessarily do, that values its own *Peace* and *Preservation*: but it pretends not to invade the Liberty of their *Thoughts*, or to lay rigid Restraints on their *Opinions*; and so long as they dissent from us *modestly* and *peaceably*, they may enjoy their own Opinions, and our Communion too. And as for those *Foreign Communities* of Christians that differ from us, we pass no severe Sentences against them; but do believe, and hope, and earnestly pray that the God of all Mercies will pity their Errors, and connive at their Defects, and finally unite them to us
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for ever in the blissful Communion of the *Church Triumphant*. Nor doth our Religion obtrude itself upon the Minds of Men, by the bare Warrant of an *imperious Authority*; but fairly appeals to our Understandings, and casts itself upon the Tryal of our *Reason*: exacting of us no further Assent, than what the Evidence claims upon which it is founded; and is so far from exacting of us a *blind-fold Assent* to it without Examination, that it readily exposes itself to the severest *Enquiry*, and asks no other favour but to stand or fall by the impartial Sentence of our *Reason*. It tells us both *what* we are to believe, and *why*; and not only *allows*, but *requires* us to examine the Grounds and Reasons of it; in all which there is not the least shadow of *imposing* on Mens Minds, or usurping on their Rights of *judging* for themselves. But alas! it is not only the Church of *Rome* that is guilty of this unnatural *Tyranny*: for how many are there of all Parties among ourselves, that cannot endure the least *Contradiction*, but expect all Judgments should bow to *theirs*; and receive *their* imperious Dictates for Oracles; and are ready to *censure* all that dissent from *them* as Men of Reprobate Minds, and to *bate* and *persecute* them, because they cannot believe as fast as *they*? As if no Man had a Right to carry his Eyes in his own Head, but *They*; and their Understandings were to be a *Rule*, and *Standard* to the whole World. If another Man differs from *me*, do not I differ as much from *him*? And hath not He as much Right to judge for himself as I? But he is mistaken, you will say, and I am not; and possibly He is as confident that I am mistaken and not he; and if I think I cannot be mistaken, I

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am more mistaken than He: but certainly it is neither *Presumption* for him to know *more* than I, nor *Sin* to know *less*. What then is to be done, but to leave one another in the quiet Possession of each other's Right; and not to hector and swagger upon every Difference in *Opinion*; because he that differs from me hath as much Right to *judge* for himself as I, though he refuses to prostrate his Understanding to mine; which for any Man to expect, is a most unjust Invasion of the common *Rights* of Human Nature.

3. Every Man hath a Right not to be forced, or *impelled* to *act* contrary to the Judgment of right Reason. For right Reason is the *natural Guide* of all reasonable Creatures; it is the Light of their Feet and the Lanthorn of their Paths, and the Star by which they ought to direct their Courses. And what can be more unjust, than to force any Man to act against that which is the *Law* of his Nature? For, if He who gave me my Nature, gave me right Reason for the *Law* and *Guide* of it, I must necessarily have an undoubted Right to a full and free Permission to *follow* it; otherwise he hath given me a *Law* in vain. And if I have a Right to a full Permission to follow the *Law* of right Reason, then for any Man to impel me to act counter to it either by Hope, or Fear, or any other Motive, is a high *Injustice* to my *Nature*. For he who induces me to do any wicked, or unreasonable Action, which I should not have done, had not he induced me to it, doth, in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow the *eternal Laws* of right Reason. As for instance, the Law of right Reason requires me, when I pretend to give *Evidence*

to any Matter of Fact, to testify nothing but the *Truth* to the best of my Knowledge; he therefore who endeavours either by Promises or Threats to suborn me to testify *falsly*, doth thereby hinder me, so far as in him lies, from hearkning to the Call of right Reason. Again, Right Reason requires me to make good my *Promises*, whether they be to my Superiors, Inferiors, or Equals; and much more when I confirm them with an Oath; he therefore who by any Means endeavours to persuade me to *falsify* my Word or Oath, doth in so doing, so far as in him lies, not permit me to follow what right Reason prescribes. Once more, Right Reason commands me to bridle my *Appetite* with Temperance and Sobriety; he therefore that by Force, or Persuasion endeavours to make me *drunk*, doth, to the utmost of his Power, withhold and restrain me from following that which is the *Law* of my Nature. In a word, he who by Command or Threat, Promise or Persuasion, puts me upon any *sinful Action*, is not only guilty in the sight of God of the Sin which I commit by his Inducement; but also of doing a high *Injustice* to my Nature, of putting it out of its true Bias, and not permitting it to move and act according to the *Laws* of Reason; which is a Piece of the most *outrageous Violence* that can be offered to a rational Creature. Besides that by inducing another Man to sin, I do, as far as in me lies, betray him to eternal *Punishment*; which is as barbarous an Injustice to his *Soul*, as the Devil himself can be guilty of. For should I not call that Man a treacherous Villain, who while he pretends to embrace his Friend, should secretly stab him to the Heart; and is it not a much more bloody Villainy, under

under a specious Pretence of Kindness and good Fellowship, to stab my Brother to the *Soul*, and wound him to *eternal Death*? But whilst, like a heedless Wrestler, I thus eagerly endeavour to give my Brother a Fall, it is a thousand to one but I fall with him, and bear him Company to *eternal Torment*.

4. *Fourthly*, and *Lastly*, Every Man hath a *Right*, as he is a reasonable Creature, to be *respected* by every Man, according to the *Dignity* of his *Nature*. For as in particular Kingdoms the *King* is the Fountain of Honour, and every Man under him ought to be respected according to that *Rank* and *Degree* of Dignity, which the royal Stamp hath imprinted on him; so in the universal Kingdom of the World, God is the Fountain of Honour, and every *Being* under him ought to be treated and respected, according to the *Dignity* of its Rank and suitably to that *Character* of Perfection which God hath imprinted on its Nature. Since therefore *Man* is so highly advanced by God in the Scale of Beings, as being not only a *sensitive* but a *rational* and *immortal* Creature, he hath a Right to be treated as such by all that are of his Class and Order. And for a Man to treat a Man otherwise, is *wrongfully* to depose and degrade him from that noble Rank of *Being* wherein the God of Nature hath placed him. For whatsoever his *outward* Condition may be, I ought to consider him as a Man, as one that is placed in the same Rank of Being with *myself*; though he be my Slave, or Vassal, I ought to respect him as an Individual of my *own Kind*, and not use him rudely, harshly or contemptuously like a Dog; though he be poor and mean in his *outward* Circumstances, yet

I ought to regard him as a Branch that is sprung out of my *own Stock*, and not to contemn and despise him as if he were a Creature of an inferior *Species*: though he should be a *Fool*, or a *mad Man*, yet I ought to respect him as my Brother *Man*, *i. e.* endowed with the same *Faculties* with myself, though through the unhappy Defect of his bodily *Organs* he cannot exert and exercise them; and not to scorn and deride him, as if he were an *Ape*, or a *Baboon*, that seemed to be made on Purpose to be laughed at: yea though (which is worst of all) he should be a *lewd*, or *wicked Man*, yet I ought to consider him as a *Stem* of my own *Root*; and not abuse, disdain, or vilify him, as if he were only a two-legged *Brute*, or an upright *Animal*. So that there is a Respect that is eternally *due* to Human Nature; where-ever it is, or whatever Disadvantages it is attended with, it is stamped with the Image of God, and that ought to be revered by the whole Creation. And therefore whoever uses a Man inhumanly, affronts both *God* and his *own Kind*, and violates the most sacred Rights of *Human Nature*. If therefore we could render to Men their Natural Right and Due, we must take Care not to behave ourselves *rudely* and *insolently*, *superciliously* or *contemptuously* towards them: and we must endeavour, as much as in us lies, to accommodate ourselves to their particular Tempers, and not be *froward* and *untractable*, or tenacious of our own Humour, especially when it lies in another Man's way; but be apt to recede and give Place, that there may be room for other Men's Humours, as well as ours. For what reason is there, that our particular Humour should take up all the World? *We* have no
more

more Right to be morose, or inflexible, than *other* Men; and should *they* be as unyielding as *we*, we must either stand at a perpetual *Bay*, or resolve to jostle with every one we meet, till *we* have forced all to give way, or *they* have forced *us*. For whilst we want this Complaisance towards others, we are in Society like irregular Stones in a Building, which are full of Roughness and Corners, that take *take* up more room than they *fill*; and, till they are polished and made *even*, will not permit others to lie near them. This Respect therefore we owe to the human Nature, which is *common* to all Men, to file off that unmanly *Sharpness* and *Ruggedness* of Humour, which renders us perverse and untractable in our Conversation; that so we may be able to compose ourselves into such respectful, courteous, and obliging Deportment towards all Men, as is due to the *essential Dignity* of human Nature. And thus you see what Rights are accruing to Men as they are rational Creatures, and consequently what Acts of *Justice*, as such, they owe one another.

C H A P. III.

*Of Justice in preserving the Rights of Men,
as united together by Natural Relations:
and as joined together in Society.*

Thirdly, **W**E will consider Men as Rational Creatures *united* together by *Natural Relations*; such as Parents and Children, Brothers and Sisters, and consanguineous Kindred; in which

several Relations they have their peculiar *Rights* appertaining to them. Thus *Parents*, by giving Nurture and Education to their Children, have a natural *Right* to be beloved, and revered, and obeyed by them; and for *Children* to withhold these *Dues* from them is not only a foul *Ingratitude*, but a great *Injustice*: they owe their Parents for their Lives and Limbs, for the Health of their Bodies and the Use of their Faculties; and what a small Composition is there in their *Love* and *Obedience* for so great a Debt? They borrowed their *Being* from their Parents, and therefore are their natural Subjects, Properties, and Pensioners; and to be sure every *Lord* hath a Right to the Obedience of his *Subject*, every *Owner* to the Disposal of his *Property*, every *Benefactor* to the Love of his *Pensioner*; and consequently every *Parent*, who is *all these* together, to all the Respects and Duties from their *Children*. And so, on the other hand, *Children* have a Right to be treated as Children to their *Parents*, that is, as their natural Images and Copies, as Parts of their own Substance, as Flesh of their Flesh, and Bone of their Bone, or as *themselves* derived and multiplied; which gives them a natural Right to be dearly beloved and kindly treated, to be fed and cloathed, instructed and provided for by their Parents, according to their *Power* and *Ability*: and for any Parent not to render these *Dues* and *Rights* to his Children, is not only an unnatural *Cruelty*, but a barbarous *Injustice*. And then for Brethren and Sisters and consanguineous Relations, their partaking of the same *Blood* and *Substance*, as being coined in the same *Mint*, and more immediately derived from the same *Root* and *Fountain*, gives them a natural

Right

Right to be *mutually* beloved, and esteemed, and relieved, and assisted by one another ; and they cannot be unkind, ill-natured, or hard hearted towards one another, without breaking all the Tyes of *Nature*, and being unjust Violaters of its *sacred Rights*. These, in short, are the Rights which accrue to Men, as *united* together by *Natural Relations*.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, We will consider Men as Rational Creatures joined together in *Society*: And because *Society* is natural to Men, and that not only as they are Rational Creatures, but as they were always born and bred in *Society*; therefore whatsoever Rights accrue to them from hence may be justly ranked among those Rights which are *Natural*. And Men being by Nature united in *Society* with one another, there doth from thence accrue to us a Right to all that is *necessary* to the obtaining the common Benefits of *Society*; otherwise our being united in *Society* would be perfectly *insignificant* to us. Now the common Benefit of *Society* is *mutual Assistance, Comfort* and *Support*; to the obtaining of which these Things are absolutely necessary.

1. Love. 2. Peace. 3. Truth. 4. Repute.
5. Protection. 6. Communication in the Profits of Intercourse.

To all which every Man must have a Right, by virtue of his being in *Society*; otherwise he is in *Society* to no Purpose. These things I shall but very briefly insist on, because I have handled most of them at large upon another occasion*.

1. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to be *beloved* of one another. For

* *Christian Life*, Vol. I.

being all incorporate Members of one Body, we naturally owe each other a *mutual* Sympathy and Fellow-feeling of each other's Pains and Pleasures; without which we can never be concerned as we ought to *succour* and *relieve* one another, If I *partake* in another's Joys and Sorrows, it is my Interest to contribute all I am able to his Happiness; but unless I am *Partner* in his Fortunes, it will be indifferent to me whether he be happy, or miserable. And as it is *Sympathy* that engages us to a *mutual Assistance*, so it is *Love* that engages us to a *mutual Sympathy*; it is *Love* that confederates our Souls, and causes to espouse one another's Interests; and therefore so far as we fall short of this, we must necessarily fall short of the End of our *Society*, which is to *aid* and *assist* one another: which we shall never do, unless we are constantly inclined to it by a *mutual Benevolence*. But while we hate, and malign one another, our being united together in *Society* will only furnish us with surer Means and fairer Opportunities to wreck our Spite uponeach other. So that not to *love* one another while we are thus associated, is not only *uncharitable*, but *unjust*; since we thereby rob one another of one of the most *necessary* Means to obtain the End of our Society. For when Mens *Hearts* are divided, it is impossible their *Hands* should be long united in *mutual* Defence and Assistance: so that by withdrawing our Love from each other, we do, so far as in us lies, *excommunicate* one another from the common Benefits of *Society*; which, since we have all a Natural Right to, is highly *dishonest* and *injurious*.

2. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Peace*; that is to live peaceably and quietly

quietly ourselves, so long as we do not causelessly vex and disturb others. For *Society* being nothing but an *united Multitude*, it is indispensably necessary to the Preservation of its Union, that every individual Member shall *quietly* comport himself towards every one, in that Degree and Order wherein he is placed; because as the Health of natural Bodies depends upon the Harmony of their Parts, so doth the common Good of Societies, or political Bodies. It is *Peace* and *mutual Accord* which is the Soul that doth both animate and unite Society, and keep its Parts from dispersing, and flying abroad into Atoms; which nothing but Force and Violence can hinder them from, when once they are broken, and divided. For he that cannot enjoy his Peace *in* Society, is in a worse Condition than if he were *out* of it, and lived in some solitary Desert alone by himself: for there is no *Solitude* so dismal, as a *vexatious* and *quarrelsome* Society. Whilst therefore Men are of an unpeaceable Temper, and do affect to live like *Salamanders* in the Fire of Strife and Contention; they are the common *Pests* and *Nusances* of Society: for where-ever they dwell, they lay an Imbargo on all sociable Communion, stop all the Inter-changes of good Offices between Men, turn all Conversations into Tragedies, and convert all Societies into Maps, and Images of *Hell*, that black and dismal Region of dark Hatred, fiery Wrath, and horrible Tumult. And whereas by the *Fundamental Laws* of Society, every Man hath an undoubted Right, not to be *disturbed* in the Enjoyment of his innocent *Pleasures*, not to be hindered in the advancing his lawful *Profits*, not to be interrupted in the Prosecution of his reasonable
Designs,

Designs, not to be detained in his *Afflictions*, or vexed and grieved with causeless *Aggravations* of them; it is the proper Business of *litigious Spirits* to invade and overthrow these Rights, and, so far as they are able, to turn every Man out of the Possession and Enjoyment of them. So that they are a *publick Offence* and *Injury* to Mankind; and ought to be looked upon as so many *common Baretters* in the World. In short, every Man by virtue of his being in *Society* hath a Right to *Peace*, so long as he demeans himself justly and peaceably towards others; he therefore that disturbs another Man's Peace, unless it be in the *Defence* of his own, or other Mens *Right* or *Peace*, is an Infringer of the *natural Rights* of human *Society*.

3. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Truth*; that is, we have a Right to know the true Sense of each others *Minds* and *Intentions*, whensoever we pretend to report and discover it by our *Speech*; for it is only our *Speech* that capacitates us for a rational *Society*. Our Words are the *Credentiaries* and *Intelligencers* of the Society and Intercourse of our Minds; and it is only by *these* that Souls do correspond and communicate their Thoughts to one another: it is by these that they mutually divert their Sorrows, and mingle their Mirth; impart their Secrets, communicate their Counsels, and make mutual Compacts and Agreements to supply and assist each other. And indeed *Words* are the *Rudders* that steer all human Affairs, the Spring that sets the Wheels of Action going; and the Hands work, the Feet walk, and all the Members and all the Senses act by their Direction and Impulse; and there is scarce any Communication

or Intercourse among Men, but what is transacted by their *Speech*. So that if Men were under no Obligation to express their Thoughts *truly* to one another, there could be no such thing as human *Society* in the World; for it is impossible their Minds should converse, while their Words do falsely *echo* and report their Thoughts. In a word, Society and Conversation being the great *Bank* and *Exchange* of Souls, *Truth* and *Integrity* herein is the one publick Faith of Mankind; which every Man virtually engages himself to keep, by being and continuing a *Member* of human *Society*. For human Society being a Society of *Minds*, implies, in the very Nature of it, an universal Contract and Agreement to signify our Minds *truly* to one another; and therefore since *Words* are the natural Instruments by which this Signification is made, every Man by virtue of that Contract hath a Right to have the *true Meaning* of every Man's *Mind* in his Words, to have every Man turn himself inside outward to him whensoever he speaks, and to measure his Words by his Meaning, and his Meaning, so far as he is able, by the *Truth* and *Reality* of things. And therefore whosoever *lies*, or *equivocates* to another, by laying Ambushes in his Words, or lurking behind them in reserved Meanings, doth thereby *injuriously* deprive him of the *natural Right* of Society. And therefore by the way, whatsoever the *Romish* Casuists may pretend, *Equivocation* is as great an Injustice as *Lying*; as being both directed to the same End and Purpose, *viz.* to rob those whom we speak to of their *Right* to our Meaning and Intentions; which he who *equivocates* doth as effectually, as he that lies. So that in reality an equivocating *Jesuit* is as great an *Out-law*

law to Society, as a common *Liar*; nor can his *ambiguous* Words be any more depended on than *false* ones, for the Signification of his Meaning; but if what he falsely or equivocally *affirms* to be his Mind and Meaning, he attests with his *Oath*, he doth not only thereby wrong *Man*, but horribly affront God. For an *Oath* is a solemn Invocation of God, to bear Witness to what we *assert*, or *promise*; and therefore if what we assert be false, we call *God* to witness to a *Lie*; which is to suppose either that there is no God at all, or, which is a thousand times worse, that God is as great a *Liar* as ourselves. For he that calls God to witness what he saith, must be presumed to believe that God will witness *for him*, and consequently that God will witness falsely, if what he says be false; which is such a Blasphemy against the God of *Truth*, as no Vengeance can sufficiently expiate. And as in the matter of *Affertion* every Man hath a Right to *Truth*, so he hath also in the matter of *Promise*; provided he be promised nothing but what is *lawful* and *possible*: and therefore for any Man to promise what he intends not to perform, or go back from his Promise when he lawfully may, or can perform it, is an Act of unjust *Rapine*: and I may every whit as honestly rob another of what *is his* without my Promise, as of what I have *made his* by it; he having an *equal Right* to both, by the fundamental Laws of Society. But if he promises with an *Oath*, as in matters of publick Trust and Administration we usually do; he doth not only owe a just and punctual Performance unto *Man*, but to *God* himself, whom he calls to witness that what he swears he intends to perform, according to the *true* and *natural* Meaning of his Words: and he solemnly invokes God to avenge his Non-performance. So that if
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he fail of what he hath promised by his *Oath*, or doth not execute it according to its true *Meaning*; he is guilty not only of a high Injustice to *Man*, but of a horrid Prophanation of the Name of *God*; whom he hath solemnly called to witness to a Lie, whose Wrath he hath imprecated on his own Head, and whose Justice he hath obliged by a dreadful Contract severely to avenge his *Perjury*. He therefore who *lies*, *equivocates*, or *forswears* himself, whether it be in asserting or promising, violates that *universal Contract* truly to signify our Meaning to another, which human *Society* implies, and upon which it is founded; and whilst he doth so, there is no Intercourse can be had with him, but he is a Creature by himself, an Enemy to the World, that lives in a State of War with all Mankind, and out of all Laws and Obligations of human *Society*: and so whilst he continues in it, and pretends to observe its natural Rights, he doth by his Equivocations, and Lies, wrong and injure all he converses with.

4. By Virtue of our being united in *Society* we have a Right to *Credit*, and to a fair *Estimation* among one another. For the great End of human *Society* is, that by their mutual Intercourses Men might *aid* and *assist* one another; and it is for this purpose that Men combine themselves into *Societies*, that thereby they may enjoy a delightful *Conversation*, void of Fear, Suspicion, and Danger; and by *exchanging* their Labours, Counsels, and Commodities, may be mutually *helpful* and *beneficial* to one another. And this End no Man can ever attain, without having a fair *Credit* and *Estimation* among those with whom he deals and converses: for
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who will trust to a Man of a *lost Reputation*? Or who would willingly have any Intercourse with one whom he cannot *trust* and *confide* in? *Credit* is the main Sinew that holds *Society* together, and there is scarce any Conversation or Dealing between Man and Man, but what requires a mutual *Trust*, and *Confidence* in one another. Since therefore all *Trust* and *Credit* is founded upon *good Repute*, every Member of our Society, who hath not *forfeited* his good Name, hath a natural Right to be well-reputed and spoken of; and whosoever either by false *Witness*, publick *Slanders*, or private *Whisperings*, endeavours to attaint an innocent Man's Reputation, doth thereby *injuriously* attempt to exclude him from the *Conversation* of Men, and shut the Door of human *Society* against him. And this, how lightly soever it may be thought of, is one of the highest Acts of *Injustice* that one Man can offer to another; for a *good Name*, saith Solomon, *is rather to be chosen than great Riches, and loving favour rather than Silver and Gold*, Prov. xxii. 1. And indeed in its Consequences it is much more so to every Man; because upon his *good Name*, his *Ability* to do good to himself, or Friends, or Neighbours, the *Success* of his Affairs, his best *Comforts*, chiefest *Interests*, and dearest *Conveniencies* of Life, yea, and sometimes his *Life* itself depends: so that in *defaming* of others, we commonly *rob*, sometimes *murder*, and always *injure* them; and there are no *Damages* so irreparable, no Wounds so incurable, no Scars so indelible, as those of a *slandrous Tongue*. For wheresoever its venomous Arrows fall, no Eminency of Rank, Dignity of Place, Sacredness of Office, no Innocence of Life, Circumspection of Behaviour, Benignity of Nature

Nature and Deportment can protect Men against them; no Force can resist, no Act can decline them, no Vindication assail their mischievous Impressions, but still, *aliquid adhærebit*, let the Innocence they wound be never so well cured, some mark of Dishonour will remain. Whosoever therefore either *forges*, or *spreads*, or rashly *entertains* a Slander against any Man, doth in so doing injuriously offend against the *natural Rights* of *Society*, and is at once a Thief, a Ravisher, and a Murderer; a *Robber* of the good Name, a *Deflowerer* of the Reputation, and a *Murderer* of the Honour of his Neighbour. And yet, good God! how strangely doth this *unjust* and *villainous Practice* prevail in all Societies and Conversations of Men! Among whom it is grown so common to asperse causelessly, that no Man *wonders* at it, few *dislike* it, and scarce any *detest* it: but whilst the black-mouthed Calumniator is blustering against all that stand in his way, and exhaling his poisonous Breath from his venomous Heart; he is heard not only with *Patience* but with *Pleasure*, and looked upon as a Man of a *notable Talent*, and judged very serviceable to the *Party* he is engaged in. So that now this odious *Vice* is grown a fashionable Humour, a pleasing *Entertainment*, a knack of carrying on some curious feat of *Policy*: and so *epidemical* is the Mischief grown, that it is dangerous for a Man who hath any Sense of *Honesty* or *Justice*, to come into any Conversation, without being tempted to wish himself sequestred from Society, and to cry out with the Prophet, Jer. ix. 2, 3. *O that I had in the Wilderness a lodging Place of way-faring Men, that I might leave my People and go from them; for they are an Assembly of trea-*

treacherous Men, and they bend their Tongues like a Bow for Lies.

5. By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have a Right to *Protection* from one another: for it was for this Reason that God brought us forth in a State of *Society*, and linked us to one another by the Inclinations of our Nature; that so we, who are *single* a Sort of the most *defenceless* Creatures, whom Nature hath not furnished, either with the defensive, or offensive Armour which is natural to *other* Creatures, might, by an *Union* of Forces, be able to secure ourselves against Foreign Outrage and Violence; and being *associated* for this end by the Law of our Nature, we are thereby obliged, so far as we are able, to *defend* one another. All *Mankind* are one Body, *incorporated* by the Charter of *Nature*, whereby every Member is obliged to stand by and assist his Fellow, so long as he acts as a *Member*, and keeps within the *Rules* of human Society. Whilst therefore I do not by offending others, offend against the Charter of *Nature*, I have a Right to be *defended* by every Man, so far as he hath Power and Opportunity; and whosoever offends me, ought to be looked on and proceeded with as a *publick Offender* against the Corporation of *Mankind*. For the *Whole* is concerned in every *Part*; and as he that bruises the Toe offends the Body, and engages every Member against him; so he who wrongfully hurts any *Member* of the human *Society*, is thereby injurious to the *Whole*, and ought to be repelled and opposed by *every Member* of it: and he who *refuses* to aid his Fellow-member when injuriously struck at, and it is in his Power to defend him, is a *Traitor* to the Common Cause, a
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false-hearted Turn-coat and base Deserter of the Society of Mankind. He that can patiently sit still, and hear his Brother's *Name* torn in pieces by a slanderous Tongue, when it is in his Power to *purge* and *vindicate* him, robs him of the common *Rights* of a Man; he that can see his Brother's *Life* injuriously exposed, either by open Violence or secret Practice, when it is in his Power to *rescue* him, treats him like an utter *Alien* and *Foreigner* to Mankind: he that can suffer his Brother to be robbed of his *Estate*, or defrauded in his *Property*, when it is in his Power to *defend* and *right* him, unjustly with-holds from him what he *owes* him by the Charter of human *Society*; and in so doing doth not only offend against his *Brother* in particular, but also against the whole *Society* of which he is a *Part* and *Member*. So that, in short, as we are all united by the God of Nature into the same *Corporation*, we are obliged in *Justice* manfully to defend each others Lives, Estates, and Reputations: and if we *wilfully* permit any Fellow-member to be murdered, slandered, robbed, or cozened, when it is in our Power to prevent it, we do not only wrongfully with-hold from him his natural Right to be defended by us, but foully betray the common Interest of Mankind; for both which we shall one Day give a dear Account to the supreme Head and Sovereign of all *Societies*.

6. *Sixthly* and *Lastly*, By Virtue of our being united in *Society*, we have also a Right to share with one another in the Profits of our *Commerce* and *Inter-course*. For as of all other *Creatures* we are the best fitted for *Society*, by reason of that *peculiar* Faculty we have of communicating our Thoughts and Minds

to one another; so of all other Creatures we stand in the greatest *need* of it, by reason of our *Insufficiency* to supply and relieve ourselves. For as for *other* Creatures, after they come into the World, they are much sooner able to help themselves than we; and after *we* are most able to help ourselves, there are a World of Necessaries and Conveniencies without which we cannot be happy, and with which we cannot be supplied without each other's *Aid* and *Assistance*. And therefore God created us in *Society*, and imprinted *sociable Inclinations* on our Natures; that being by them combined and united together, we might be mutually *helpful* to one another, and ready to *assist* and *supply* each other, according to our several Talents and Abilities, with such Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life as the Condition of our Nature requires. This therefore being one *main End* of our Society, *viz.* to be dutiful Ministers of God's Providence towards one another, in supplying those Wants and Necessities which he hath made, and which he hath made to be supplied by our *mutual* good Offices and Ministries; every Man hath thereupon a *Right* to be aided and assisted by every one with whom he hath any Dealing or Intercourse; and to have some share of the Benefit of all that Exchange, Traffick, or Commerce, which passes between him and others. For every Man hath a Right to his own *Labour*, and *Industry*; and therefore if another be benefited by mine, it is but just and equal that I should be benefited by *his*; that he should so exchange *Labour*, or *Commodities* with me, as that my Necessities should be served as well as his own; and that while he reaps what I sow, and enjoys

enjoys the Harvest of *my* Labour, he should repay me such a Share of *his*, as my Convenience and Necessity calls for. But if he ingross all the Profit of our Exchange and Commerce to *himself*, he is rather a *Wen* of the Body Politick, that draws all the Nourishment to himself, and starves the neighbouring Parts; than a regular Member, that contents itself with such a Share as is proportionate to its own Bulk and Magnitude, and gladly permits his *Fellow-members* to live and thrive as well as *he*. So that for any Man in his Dealings with others, to take Advantage from their *Necessity* or *Ignorance*, to oppress or over-reach them; to use them *cruelly*, so as wilfully to damnify them; or *hardly*, so as either to take all the Advantage to himself, or not to allow them such a competent Share of it as is necessary to support and maintain them, according to their Rank and Station; is an injurious Invasion of that *natural Right*, which the very End and Design of human *Society* gives them.

And thus you see what are *natural Rights* of Men, considered as *Rational Creatures* inhabiting *mortal Bodies*, and united to one another by *natural Relations* and *Society*; all which Rights are inherent in them *antecedently* to all human Laws and Constitutions: and though there had never been any other Law but that of Nature, yet they might have justly claimed them of one another, as *Eternal Dues* which no Laws can cancel, no Custom dissolve, no Circumstances make void or abrogate. So that to do justly with respect to Mens *natural Rights*, is to render them what we owe them by the Obligations of *Nature*, as they are *Rational Creatures*; to treat them *equitably*, to

do them all the *good*, we can justly desire they should do to *us*, if we were in their Circumstances; quietly to permit them to *judge* for themselves, without endeavouring to tyrannize over their Minds by persecuting, censuring, and reviling them, because they are not of our Opinion; to suffer them freely to comply with the Dictates of *right Reason*, and not to put them either by Force, Command, or Presumption upon any *wicked* and *unreasonable Act*; in a word, to pay them all those fair Respects that are due to the Dignity of *human Nature*, to treat them courteously, and humanely, and not to bespeak or use them as if they were so many Dogs, or brute Animals; these are *Eternal Dues*, which every rational Creature owes to its own Kind, and which we cannot withhold from one another without high *Injustice* to human Nature. But then as we are rational Creatures inhabiting these *mortal Bodies*, we are obliged in Justice not to maim, or destroy, or captivate one another's Bodies; unless it be in the necessary *Defence* of our own Lives, Estates, or Liberties; not to deprive one another of our necessary Livelihood, and Subsistence; but out of our Abundance to *supply* the pinching Necessities of the *Poor* and *Needy*. These things we *owe* to one another as we are all the Tenants of God, sent down into this lower World, and quartered in these Houses of Clay: and if we rob one another of what we are thus intitled to by the present State and Condition of our Being, we are extremely *unjust* to God and to each other. Again, as we are rational Creatures united to each other by *natural Relations*, we are obliged to render to each other all those Respects and Duties, which the Nature
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of our *Relation* calls for; as we are *Parents*, to love, and instruct, and make suitable Provisions for our *Children*; as we are *Children*, to love and reverence, succour and obey our *Parents*: as we are *Brethren* and *natural Kindred*, to love and honour, succour and relieve one another: and if we withhold from each other any of these *Rights* or *Dues*, which the Nature of our Relation calls for, we make an injurious Inroad upon the most sacred Rights and Inclosures of *Nature*. Lastly, as we are Rational Creatures, united to one another by natural *Society*, we owe *Love* and *Peace*, *Truth* and *Credit*, *Protection* and *Participation* of Profit to one another. Whilst therefore we hate and malign, and vex and disturb each other; whilst we lye and equivocate, and violate our *Promises* and *Oaths*; whilst we refuse to *defend* each other's Lives, Estates or Reputation; and *usurp* all the Profits of our Exchange and Intercourse, not allowing those whom we deal with a sufficient Share to subsist and live by; we trample upon all the *natural Rights* of human Society, and demean ourselves as open Enemies, and Out-laws to Mankind.

Wherefore, in the Name of God, if in this degenerate Age, whereinto we are fallen, *Christianity* hath quite lost its just Power and Dominion over us; let us be honest *Heathens* at least, though we resolve to be no longer *Christians*: if we will needs be deaf to the Voice of our *revealed* Religion, yet for shame let us attend to the Voice of our *Nature*, and not leap down at once from the Perfection of *Christians* into the wretched Condition of *Beasts* and *Devils*. O! for the Love of God and the Honour of those noble Natures he hath given us, stop

at *Men* at least, though you are fallen from *Christianity*; and do not, by your Cruelty and Inhumanity, Frauds and Calumnies, Oppressions, Lyes, and shameless Perjuries, at the least approach towards that, at which *Humanity* starts with Horror and Amazement; do not defame and scandalize your *Natures*, and render yourselves a Shame and Reproach to the Name of *Men*, by these your outrageous Invasions of the common *Rights* of *human Nature*.

C H A P. IV.

Of Justice, as it preserves the Acquired Rights of Men: and particularly those which arise from Sacred and Civil Relations.

I Proceed now to the second Sort of *human Rights*, which Justice between Man and Man relates to, *viz.* such as are not Natural to them either as *Rational* Creatures, or as dwelling in *Mortal Bodies*, or as joined to one another by natural *Relations*, or as naturally united in *Society*; but are *acquired* subsequently to the *Rights of Nature*, by that mutual *Intercourse* which passes between Men in their Society with one another. Which Rights, though they are not *Natural*, but *Accidental*, are yet founded on the *Rights of Nature*, and therefore ought to be preserved as sacredly and as inviolably as *these*: for whatsoever Rights Men do *acquire* in the Performance of the common Rights of Nature,

Nature, are *equivalent* with them, as being founded on the same Reasons. Now all those Rights which are not Natural, are acquired one of these ways; either, *First*, by *Sacred* and *Civil* Relations; or *Secondly*, by *Legal* Possession; or *Thirdly*, by *Personal* Accomplishments; or *Fourthly*, by outward *Rank* and *Quality*; or *Fifthly*, by *Bargaining* and *Compact*.

I. There are some Rights acquired by *Sacred* and *Civil* Relations, and of these there are several Sorts.

First, There is the Relation of *Sovereign* and *Subject*.

Secondly, Of *subordinate* Magistrates to the *Sovereign* and *People*.

Thirdly, Of *Pastors* and *People*.

Fourthly, Of *Husband* and *Wife*.

Fifthly, Of *Friend* and *Friend*.

Sixthly, Of *Masters* and *Servants*.

Seventhly, Of *Truster* and *Trustee*.

Eighthly, Of *Benefactor* and *Receiver*.

Ninthly, There is the Relation of *Debtor* and *Creditor*. Of the proper Rights of each of which Relations I shall give as brief an Account as I can.

First, There is the Relation of *Sovereign* and *Subject*; which is the highest and most sacred of all those Relations that are not *natural*. For God being the Supreme Lord and Sovereign of the World, all lawful Power and Authority must be derived from *him*; for as in particular Kingdoms, the *King* is the Fountain of Authority, from whence executive Power descends upon *subordinate* Magistrates: so in the universal Monarchy of the World, *God* is the Fountain of all Power and Dominion; from

whom all Authority and Right of Government descends upon *Princes* and *Governors*; and whosoever exercises Dominion in the World without *Divine* Authority, is an *Usurper* in the Kingdom of God. But then the Derivation of this Authority from Him is either *immediate*, or *mediate*; those who are supreme under Him derive their Authority *immediately* from Him, and are the *Channels* by whose Mediation he derives Authority to their *subordinate* Magistrates; so that the *subordinate* Magistrates of particular Kingdoms derive their Authority from God by the Hands of their *Kings*, but the *Kings* themselves derive theirs from God's own Hands *immediately*: and whatever the particular form of any Government be, whether it be *Monarchy* or *Polyarchy*, that which is *supreme* in it under God must be immediately from him. So far from true is that modern Maxim of some Jesuited Politicians, *viz. That Civil Government is the People's Creature*; which by necessary Consequences excludes God from being the supreme Governor of the World: for if He be absolutely Supreme, there is none can be Supreme immediately under Him, but by an Authority derived *immediately* from him. So that the Relation of *Sovereign* hath this Right unalienably appendant to it, *to be accountable to none but God*; from whom alone it holds its Authority, and to whom alone it is subjected. And therefore for *Subjects* to call their *Sovereign* to account, is both to arraign God's Authority, and to invade his *Peculiar*; to set ourselves down in his Throne, and summon his Authority before us, and require it to submit its *awful* Head to our Doom and Sentence; which is as high and impious an Injustice,

Justice, as can be offered either to God, or Man : and (till *Papery*, that fardle of religious Impostures, set *Treason* and *Rebellion* abroad) as abhorrent to all Christian *Principles* and *Practices*, as Hell is to Heaven, or Darkness to Light. But then since Sovereigns are God's *Vicegerents*, and do reign by his Authority, they have also an inseparable *Right* to be *obeyed* in all things, wherein they do not interfere with the Commands of God ; for in obeying *them* we obey *God*, who commands by their Mouths, and wills by their Laws, and Edicts : and as he who refuses to obey the *Vice-Roy's* Command, doth in so doing disobey the *King* himself, unless he commands the contrary ; so he who disobeys his *Sovereign*, who is God's Vice-Roy, doth in so doing disobey *God*, unless it be where God hath countermanded him. So that while he commands only lawful things, he hath an *undoubted Right* to be obeyed ; because his Commands are stamped with Divine Authority, and are thereby rendered sacred, and inviolable. Again, since Sovereigns are the *supreme Representatives* of God's Power and Majesty upon Earth, as being his *immediate* Substitutes ; they have also an *unalienable Right* to be *honoured* and *reverenced* by their Subjects, because they bear God's Character, and do shine with the Rays of his Majesty ; before which every Creature in Heaven and Earth ought to bow and lye prostrate ; and therefore for Subjects to *contemn* and *vilify* their Sovereigns, to expose their Faults, and uncover their Nakedness, and lampoon and libel their Persons and Actions, is an Affront to God's own Majesty, and an unjust and impious *Prophanation* of that Divine Character they bear about them.

Once

Once more; since Sovereigns are substituted by God for the *Common Good*, to protect the Innocent, and avenge the Injured, and guard the Rights of their People against Foreign and Intestine Fraud and Violence; they must hereupon have an undoubted Right to be *aided* and *assisted* by their Subjects; because without their Aid, it will be impossible for them to accomplish the *Ends* of their Sovereignty. And therefore for Subjects to refuse to aid their Sovereign with their Purſes, or Persons, when legally required; or by any indirect Means to *withdraw* themselves from his Assistance, whenever his Necessities call for it, is to detain from him a *just Right* that is owing to his Character and Relation. And as these Rights are all implied in the Relation of a *Sovereign*, so are there others implied in the Relation of a *Subject*: for Sovereign Power being ordained by God for a *publick Good*, to guard and defend the Innocent, to shelter and relieve the Oppressed, to fence and propagate true Religion, and adjust and balance private Rights and Interests; every *Subject* hath a Right to be *protected* by it, so far as it is able, in his Person and Legal Rights, in his *just* Liberties and Privileges, and sincere Profession of *true Religion*; and that Sovereign who doth not employ his Power to these Purposes, but through wilful and affected Error or Ignorance imposes a *false Religion* on his People; or betrays, oppresses, or enslaves them himself, or permits others to do it, either out of Malice or Carelessness, is an *injurious Invader* of their Rights and Properties; and though he be not accountable to any earthly Tribunal, shall one Day answer for it at the Tribunal of God,

Secondly,

Secondly, There is the Relation of *Subordinate Magistrates* to the *Sovereign* and *People*, such are the Judges and Justices, the Governors of Towns, Cities and Provinces, and the like; who by virtue of that Authority which is stamped upon them, and which they derive, as I told you, from God, who is the Head and Spring of all Power and Dominion, have by virtue of that a Right to be *honoured*, and *reverenced*, and *obeyed* by the People according to the Degree and Extent of their Authority. For wherever it is placed, *Authority* is a sacred Thing; as being a Ray, and Impress of the Divine Majesty, and as such may justly claim *Honour* and *Reverence* from all Men; and whoever contemns the *lowest* Degree of it, offers an Affront to the *highest*. He who contemns *Subordinate Magistrates* who are vested with the King's Authority, doth therein contemn the *King*; and he who contemns the *King*, who is vested with God's Authority, doth therein contemn *God*. Whatsoever therefore the personal Faults and Defects of Magistrates may be, Men ought to consider that their Authority is a sacred Thing, and, as such, challenges their *Reverence* and *Obedience* by an unalienable Right; and that therefore to behave themselves frowardly, stubbornly, or irreverently towards a lawful Magistrate, is to detain from him his *Rights*, and offer an unjust Affront to his Character; which, how good soever they may be in other Instances, doth in this bespeak them highly *dishonest* and *injurious*. And as the Relation of *Subordinate Magistrates* intitles them to the Peoples *Reverence* and *Obedience*; so the Relation which the *Prince* and *People* bear to them, intitles them both

to

to their *Fidelity, Vigilance* and *Justice*. For subordinate Magistrates are the King's *Trustees* for himself and his People; and in their Hands he deposits the Honour, Security, and Rights of his own Crown and Dominion, together with the Safeguard and Protection of the Just and Legal Rights of his People. So that upon their Acceptance of this *Trust*, by which they engage themselves faithfully to discharge it, the King acquires a *Right* to their faithful and vigilant *Care*, to see that his Authority be *Reverenced*, his Laws *Obedyed*, his Person, Government, and Properties *Secured*; the People acquire a *Right* to be *Protected* by them in their Persons, Reputations, Liberties and Estates; and so far as they are wilfully failing either towards the King, or the People, in any of these Matters, they do *unjustly* detain the King's or the People's *Rights*, or both; they betray the *Trust* committed to them, falsify their own *Engagements*, and under the *Mask* of Authority are publick Robbers of Mankind.

Thirdly, There is the Relation of *Pastors* and *People*: for since out of his tender Care to the *Souls* of Men, God hath instituted an *Order* of Men to administer to them those holy Ordinances, by which he conveys his Grace and Spirit, to instruct them in their Duties, admonish them of their Errors; and warn them of their Dangers, and guide them to *eternal Happiness*; there doth from hence arise a near and *sacred Relation* between the *People*, and their respective *Guides* and *Pastors*. They are joined together by the Ties and Obligation of *Religion*, which gives them a mutual Right in one another; and which gives the *Pastor* a Right to be diligently *attended* to by the *People* in his religious

gious Ministrations, to be construed in the best Sense, and fairly treated and complied with in all his pious Reproofs and Admonitions, to be honoured and revered for his *Works* sake, to partake with the People in their *Temporals*, as they do with him in his *Spirituals*, and to be supported by them, according to their Ability, with a fair and honourable *Maintenance*; and they who are wanting to their *Pastor* in any of these Particulars, deprive him of that which is as much his *Right* in *Conscience*, as any thing can be theirs in *Law*. And then as for the *People*, They have also a Right to have *holy Things* duly and regularly administered to them by their *Pastor*, to be taught and instructed by him with wholesome Doctrine and Example, to be prudently admonished of their Faults and Dangers, and counselled and advised by him in all their *spiritual* Straits and Exigencies; and he who is wilfully failing in the faithful Discharge and Payment of these *Dues* is a Thief and a Robber of his People's *Souls*; that, so far as in him lies, rifles them of that which ought to be dearer to them than their Estates, or Lives, even the *Bread of Life*, without which they cannot live, but must starve and perish for ever; and if they do, it is by his *unjust Neglect* to render them their Dues, and their Blood will be required at his Hands.

Fourthly, There is the Relation of *Husband* and *Wife*, who having mutually bestowed themselves upon each other, and sealed the Deed by *Matrimonial Vow*, are thereby interwoven into one another, and morally compounded into one Person. For *Marriage* is an Union of Persons, and Incorporation of two into one by moral Ties and Ligaments; so that between

tween *Husband* and *Wife* there is the nearest and dearest Union that can be between two natural Persons; they are each other's *Property* and *Inclosure*, having by mutual Vows made over, and exchanged themselves for one another; by virtue of which they have a *mutual* Right in each other's Person, and cannot bestow themselves away from one another, without being guilty of the most outrageous *Injustice*. For the Husband is one half of the Wife, and the Wife of the Husband; and therefore whenever they *alienate* themselves from each other, they rob one another of one half of themselves. And it is this that doth so much enhance the Sin of *Adultery*, beyond that of simple *Fornication*; because when the Husband disposes his Body to another Woman, or contrariwise, he is not only guilty of an unbounded, rambling *Lust*, which is the proper Malignity of simple Fornication, but also of a foul and monstrous *Injustice*. For he having made himself his *Wife's* by Promise and Vow, cannot give away himself from her, without being impiously *injurious*, without robbing God of his Vow, and robbing her of himself, for whom she exchanged herself. And consequently they who endeavour to *seducer* the Wife from the Husband, or the Husband from the Wife, are guilty of a horrid *Injustice*, in attempting to rob God and Man of that which is most dear and precious to them, and to break through Vows and Sacred Fences to trespass on their Neighbours Inclosure, which how common soever it may be in this degenerate Age, is certainly one of the blackest *Villainies* in Nature. And as Husband and Wife have a *mutual Right* to each other's *Persons*, so they have also to each other's

other's dearest *Love* and *Affection*: for there is no Relation doth so nearly intitle and interest Persons in one another as that of *Marriage*; nor consequently, that gives them so great a Right and Title to each other's Hearts and Affections. Matth. xix. 5. *For this Cause shall a Man leave Father and Mother, and shall cleave to his Wife, and they two shall be one Flesh.* And then, *no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisbeth it*, saith the Apostle, exhorting to Matrimonial Love, *Eph. v. 29.* Husband and Wife are *one* by a moral Union of Persons, and therefore for them to hate and abuse *one another* would be as unnatural, as for a Man to hate and tear his *own Flesh*. Again, as they have a mutual Right to each other's *Persons* and *Affections*, so they have also to each others *Help* and *Assistance*: hence the Apostle calls them *Y oak Fellows*, implying, that they ought to draw *together*, and *mutually* assist one another in their common Concerns and Interests. For in the Union of their *Persons* their *Interests* is combined and united; so that *that* which is the one's is the other's: their *Meums* and *Tuums* are confounded together, and their Fortunes make a common Stock wherein they are *Partners* with one another, and are intitled to the promiscuous Use and Enjoyment of it. And being Sharers in the same Interest, they ought to be mutually *helpful* and bear a part of each other's *Cares* and *Burdens*: for when they are both intitled to the *same* Fortunes and Interests, it is by no Means just, that the one, like a slothful Drone, should dwell at Ease in the Hive, and devour the Honey, whilst the other, like a laborious Bee, goes forth and toils to gather it. These are the common *Rights* and *Dues*, which

Husband and Wife owe to one another: but then the *Husband* having the Superiority, hath a Right to be *reverenced*, and *obeyed* by his *Wife* in all things that are fair and honest, to be entertained with a gentle Behaviour, addressed to with soft Entreaties, and treated with a sweet Compliance; and therefore for a Woman to behave herself *per-versely* towards her Husband, to controul his Will in indifferent Matters, and if he will not yield, to teaze and weary him with her sour Looks, or clamorous Words, or provoking Deportment, is not only a great *Dishonour* to her own Head, but a high and shameful *Injustice*, for which she must one Day account to God, as well as for her other *Iniquities*. And then on the other hand, the *Wife* being no otherwise *inferior* to the *Husband* than the *Body* is to the *Soul*, or the *Bosom* to the *Head*, ought not to be treated by him as his *Slave* and *Servant*, but as a Part of *Himself*, *i. e.* with all Lenity and Forbearance, Tenderness and Complaisance: and, as *Plutarch* saith, *the Husband's Empire over the Wife ought to be soft and chearful*, to be allayed and sweetned with the greatest Condescension and Officiousness: and that *Soul* is not more unrighteous to its *Body*, that starves, or macerates, or evil intreats it; than the Husband is to his Wife, who behaves himself *churlishly*, *sourly* or *imperiously* towards her. *Col. iii. 19.* *Husbands love your Wives*, saith the Apostle, *and be not bitter against them, i. e.* be not morose and rough, stern and severe in your Carriage towards them; but be sure you use them with all that honourable *Regard*, prudent *Compliance*, and endearing *Familiarity*, that is due to them as they are Parts of *Yourselves*.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, There is the Relation of *Friend* and *Friend*, which I put next to that of *Husband* and *Wife*, because it is next to it in respect of Nearness and Affinity. For *Friendship* is the Marriage of *Souls*, and *Interests* and *Counsels*, the Union or Exchange of Hearts, the Clasp of mutual Affections, or true Love-knot that ties Men's Hearts and Minds together. For as for the *Matter* of Friendship, it is Love and Charity; but as for the *Form* of it, it is Charity *appropriated* to such particular Persons; so that Charity is Friendship in *common*, and Friendship is Charity *inclosed*. In a word, Charity is Friendship *expanded*, like the Force of the Sun when he rises above the Horizon, and shines upon the World; but Charity is Friendship *contracted*, like the Rays of that glorious Light drawn into the Center of a Burning-glass, and made more warm and active by their Union. When therefore Men have contracted particular *Friendships*, and espoused their Souls and Minds to one another, there doth from thence arise a *new Relation* between them beyond what common Charity creates; from which *new Relation* there accrue *new Rights* to the related Parties. For *mutual Friendship* is not a *Metaphysical* Nothing, created merely for *Contemplation*, for such as are contracted in its holy Bands to stare upon each other's Faces, and make Dialogues of News and Prettinesses, or to look Babies in one another's Eyes; but a substantial and important *Virtue*, that is fitted for the noblest Purposes, to be an Alloy to our *Sorrows*, an Ease to our *Passions*, a Discharge of our *Oppressions*, a Sanctuary to our *Calamities*, a Counsellor of our *Doubts*, a Repository of our *Secrets*, and an Improvement of our *Meditations*; a

Champion to our *Innocence*, and an Advocate for our *Interest* both with God and Men; to these brave Purposes serves every real *Friendship*, and without these it is only the empty *Name* and *Shadow* of Friendship. When therefore Men combine and unite together in this close and near *Relation*, they give each other a Right to themselves to all the above-named *Uses* and *Purposes*, to be *Guides* and *Comforts* to each other in their Doubts and Sorrows, *Monitors* and *Remembrancers* in their Errors and Oblivions, *Shelters* and *Refuges* in their Oppressions and Calamities, and faithful *Trustees* and *Secretaries* to each other's Confidences and Thoughts. These are the great *Rights* of Friendship, which whosoever detains or with-holds from his Friend, is a *false* and *unjust* Correspondent in that brave and noble *Relation*: For when we mutually contract particular Friendship with one another, it is to *these* great Purposes, or it is not *Friendship*: and when to *these* Purposes we have once joined Hands, and struck particular Amities with one another, we are bound by the tyes of common *Honesty* and *Justice*, so far as we are able, to make good our Contract to all those Intents and Purposes it extends to.

Sixthly, There is the Relation of *Masters* and *Servants*: for between Master and Servant there are *mutual Engagements*, which are either expressed in their Contract, or implied in their Relation; and whether there be any formal Contract between them, or no, their very *Relation* is an implicit Bargain, and supposes a mutual Engagement to one another. By being a *Servant* to another, I put myself into his Hands and Disposal, and devote my
Time

Time, and Pains, and Labour to him; by virtue of which he acquires a just *Right* to my Time and Service, my Fidelity and chearful Obedience: and therefore if either by Gaming, Loitering or Company-keeping, I alienate my *Time* from him; or if by my Sloth and Idleness I rob him of my *Pains* and *Labour*, or by my hypocritical Eye-Service, or betraying his Trusts, or wasting or embezzling his Goods, I deprive him of my *Truth* and *Fidelity*; or if, lastly, by my Stubbornness and Obstinacy I purloin from him my *Duty* and *Obedience*, I am a *dishonest* and *unjust* Servant; and however I may escape now, must one Day expect to give an Account to my just and All-seeing Master in Heaven. And accordingly in Scripture Servants are enjoined to *obey their Masters in all things*, Col. iii. 22. And *to do service to them with good will*, Eph. vi. 7. To serve them with *singleness of heart*, not to purloin their Goods, or answer them again in a forward and surly manner, *Tit. ii. 9, 10*. Since then they stand obliged to these Duties both by Precept of *Scripture*, and the natural Engagement of their *Relation*; it is plain they cannot act contrary thereunto, without openly transgressing the Laws of *God*, and trespassing on the Rights of *Men*. And so, on the other hand, by being a *Master* to another, I stand engaged to *maintain* and *protect* him in my Service, to pay him the Wages, or teach him the *Trade* for which he serves me; not to out-task his Ability, nor impose any thing on him but what is *tolerable* and *merciful*; to correct him with Gentleness, Prudence and Mercy, and not to restrain him too rigidly from sitting and healthful *Recreation*: and above all, to admonish him of his Faults, instruct

him in his *Duty*, and give him all chearful Encouragements to *Well-doing*. For I ought to consider, that I am Master of a *Man* of the same kind with myself, that hath Right upon that account to be treated *humanely*; which if I do not, instead of being a just *Master*, I am a savage *Tyrant*: and also I should consider that I am Master of an *immortal Man*, who, upon that account, hath a Right to be treated *religiously*, that hath a Soul to be saved, and an eternal Interest to be secured; which if I take no Care of, I treat him rather as my *Dog*, than my *Servant*, as a Beast that *perishes*, than as a Man that is to *live* for ever. So that if any of these ways I am wanting to my Servant, I am a *Transgressor* of that Rule of Righteousness that is founded in my Relation to him, and though the crying Necessities of his Soul and Body cannot penetrate my Ears, nor move my Adamantine Bowels to a more *just* and *pious* Treatment; yet the Cry of those Wrongs and Injuries I do him by my unjust, inhuman and irreligious Usage, will certainly penetrate the Ears of *God*, and provoke his Vengeance to a dire *Retribution* of it.

Seventhly, There is the Relation of *Trustees* to those that trust them: for he who trusts another, doth thereby create a very near and intimate Relation to him; so far forth as he trusts him, he puts his Case into his Hands, and deposits his Interest in his Disposal, and thereby creates him his Proxy, or his *second self*. So that when I accept of the Trust that another offers me, whether it be to be an *Arbitrator* in his Cause, or an *Executor* of his Will, or a *Guardian* to his Children, or a *Keeper* of any *Pledge* or *Depositum* he commits to me, I do thereby enter
into

into a close Alliance and Relation with him; I put on his Person, engage to supply his Place, to act as his Representative, or *alter ego*, and so far as he trusts and confides in me, to do for him as if the Case were *my own*, to determine his Cause, to execute his Will, and dispose of his Children, and secure his Pledges to him, as if I were *himself*, and those were all *my own*. And by entering into this near Relation to him, I give him a Right so far forth as he intrusts me, to my *Skill* and *Care*, *Fidelity* and *Industry*; all which, by putting on his Person, I have listd and engaged in his Service. So that if by my own *Carelessness* or *Neglect* I suffer any of his Trusts to miscarry, I am highly *dishonest* and *injurious* to him; because I undertook to do for him all that I can suppose *he* would have done for *himself*, had he been Master of my Skill and Ability. But if for a Bribe, or to serve my Interest, I betray the *Trust* he committed to me, or convert it to my own Advantage; I rob him more *basely* and *infamously*, than if I had him stand, and demanded his Purse upon the High-way. For then I had robbed him in the Person of an *Enemy*, but now I rob him in his *own*, and make use of that Trust to *betray* his Interest, by which I was as much obliged to *secure* and *defend* it, as if I had exchanged Persons with him, and his Interest were my own: and to *betray* his Interest for my own Advantage, when he had made me his *second self*, and I had engaged my self to be so, is a Piece of the most *inhuman* and *disingenuous* Perfidiousness and Injustice; because by thus doing, I abuse his good Opinion of me, for which I stand oblig'd to him, into an occasion of *betraying* him. So that in effect I have borrowed his Person, which

he freely lent me, only to *rob* and *despoil* him ; and from his Confidence in my Truth and Fidelity, by which he was justly intitled to it, have *basely* taken occasion to defraud him of that *Trust*, which he freely deposited in my Hands and Disposal.

Eighthly, There is the Relation of the *Benefactor* to the *Receiver* : for he who doth Good to another, doth thereby contract a Relation to him ; because in doing good to him he espouses his Interest, and in espousing his Interest he espouses himself : he performs the Part of his Brother, of his Father, and his God, whose highest Character and *Elogium* is to *be good* and to *do good* ; and consequently in all these Capacities he stands related to him. And by virtue of this Relation he acquires a Right in the Person obliged, to be *esteemed* and *beloved* by him ; to be prayed for and requited by him whenever he hath Opportunity and Ability. For there is always a Right acquired by *Benefits*, where there was none antecedently : he who doth a good Turn deserves and merits of him that receives it ; and what he deserves, he hath a Right to. So that every Receiver is *Debtor* to his Benefactor ; he *owes* him all the Good he receives from him ; and is always *obliged* to a thankful Acknowledgment, and, whenever he hath Opportunity, to an equivalent Requital. For though my Benefactor *gives* me his Benefit freely, as having no need of it himself, or at least not so much as I, and therefore cannot legally demand a *Repayment* of it ; yet whatsoever he *gives* me, he *deserves* of me, and whenever our Circumstances change, and he hath *my* Need, and I *his* Ability, I am in Conscience as much obliged to repay it, as if he had lent it me upon Bond. In this Case my Ability is *Security* for

for the Benefit I owe him, and his Need is a just *Demand* of it; and therefore since what he hath merited of me is his *Due*, I am extremely unjust, if when his Needs do demand it, I do not repay him so far as I am able. But if either I am not able to repay him an equivalent Benefit, or he hath no need or occasion for it; I am bound in Justice to express my *Gratitude* to him in thankful Remembrances and Acknowledgments, to take all fair Occasions to own and celebrate his Goodness, and by all the little Services I can render him, to express a forward *Willingness* to make him a full Requitall. For as in matter of *Debt*, he who cannot pay *all* must compound and pay so far as he is *able*; so in the matter of *Benefits*, he who cannot make a compleat Requitall, is obliged in Justice to make some small *Composition*, and pay so much in the *Pound* as his Ability extends to; and if he can do no more, to express a *grateful Sense* of them, and give thankful *Words* for beneficial *Deeds*; which all generous Benefactors esteem the *noblest Requitall*. But he who receives Benefits without some thankful Acknowledgment, acts the Part of a *Swine*, that greedily devours the Acorns, and never looks up towards the Tree from whence they drop: and he who requites Benefits with Injuries, acts the part of a *Devil*, that would fain have thrown that blessed Being out of Heaven, who created and placed him in it.

Ninthly and *Lastly*, There is the Relation of *Creditor* and *Debtor*: for he who lends to another Man, and gives him Credit either for Money or Commodities, or accepts of his Security for what he lends to another, doth thereby contract a Relation to him; by which he acquires a Right

to be justly *repaid* according to Contract and Agreement. For lending and crediting doth not alienate the *Property*; the Debtor hath only a Right to use what he borrows for his present *Convenience* or *Necessity*, but the Property remains in the Hands of the *Creditor*, who hath the same Right to it as when it was in his own Possession. And it being so, the Rule of *Common Justice* obliges us that we do not borrow more than we have a fair Prospect of *Repaying*; unless he that credits us *knows* our Inability, and is willing to run the Hazard. For he who engages himself in Debt beyond what he can reasonably hope to *repay*, takes that from his Creditor upon Promise of Payment, which he knows he is never likely to *restore* him; which is at least as high an *Injustice*, as if he had taken it by *Force* and *Violence*. And the same is to be said of borrowing upon *false* or *insufficient* Securities, such as bad Mortgages, counterfeit Pawns, or insolvent Bonds-men: for he who takes up his Neighbour's Goods or Money upon such Securities, as he knows are incapable of *repaying* him, doth as manifestly wrong him, as if he had taken them by *Stealth*, or *Robbery*. And since our Debts are our Creditor's Rights, if we would be just Debtors, we must neither reckon what we owe to be our own; nor so dispose of it, as to put it out of our Power to restore it to the true *Proprietor*: he that hath so much of his own, and so much of other Mens, ought not to spend, or give, as if it were all his own. For if he that hath borrowed One Thousand Pounds and is worth another, lives to the utmost Height and Proportion of Two Thousand, he must necessarily spend upon what he hath borrowed, and put it
out

out of his Power to restore it; and in so doing *rob* and *dispoil* his Creditor, to maintain himself in his *Prodigality*. And as Debtors ought to be careful so to dispose of what they owe, as that they may be able to *repay* it; so they ought to be no less careful to repay it upon due *Demand*, or according to *Contract* and *Agreement*. For as it is unjust to deprive a Creditor of his *Money*, so it is unjust to deprive him of the *Use* and *Possession* of it, any *longer* than he consents and agrees to it: because as he hath a Right to his Money, so he hath Right to possess and use it. And therefore for Debtors to *defer* and *protract* their Payments without their Creditors Consent, when it is in their Power to discharge them, to put them upon fruitless Attendances, and make Advantages of their Money against their Consent, and beyond their *Contracts* and *Agreements*, is a Degree of Injustice next to that of robbing and *despoiling* them of it; because by thus doing they do not only force their Creditors to waste their Time in tedious Attendances, and take them off from their other Businessses, but also rob them of the *Use* and *Possession* of their Money; which they have as much Right to, as to the Money itself. And if to defer Payment be so unrighteous in a Debtor, then to *refuse* and *deny* it, or take indirect Courses either to *abate*, or *avoid* it, is much more unrighteous: because this is not only to deprive a Creditor of the present *Use* and *Possession* of his Property, but of his *Property* too; and how can that Man call any Thing he possesses his *own* Right and Property, whilst he thus denies another *his*? So that by an indispensable Rule of Justice, every Debtor is obliged rather to strip himself

himself of all, and cast himself naked on the *Providence* of God; than by *denying* his Debts, or indirectly *shifting* the Payment of them, to feather his Nest with the Spoils of his *Neighbour*. When therefore by *refusing* to pay what we owe, we force our Creditors upon costly, or troublesome *Suits* to recover their own; or by pleading *Protections*, or sheltering ourselves in a *Prison*, we avoid being forced to it by Law; or by fraudulent *Breakings*, we necessitate them to compound our Debts, and accept a Part for the Whole; which soever of these Ways we take, I say, to deprive our Creditors of their Rights, we are inexcusably *dishonest*; and *unrighteous*. And though by these, or such like *knavish Evasions*, we may force them to acquit and discharge us, yet we cannot force *God*, in whose Book of Accounts our Debts are *recorded*, as well as in *theirs*; and it concerns us sadly to consider, that there is nothing can cross, or cancel them *there*, but only a full *Restitution*; and that if they are not cancelled *there*, all the Tricks and Evasions in the World will never be able to secure us from a dismal *Reckoning*, and a more dismal *Execution*.

And thus you see what those acquired Rights are which are due from Man to Man, upon account of their *Civil* and *Sacred* Relations.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

Of Justice, as it preserves the Rights of Men acquired by Legal Possession.

II. **T**H E R E are other Rights acquired by *legal Possession*. For when there was but *one* Man, he was Lord and Proprietor of *all* this lower World; but when he had propagated a *Family* from his Loins, and that *Family* was by Degrees branched into several *Tribes*; he sent forth these *Tribes* under the Conduct of their Heads, Fathers, and Princes, to go and take *Possession* of such and such Portions of his Earth, as their Numbers, Necessities and Conveniencies required; which when they had done, the Prince and Father of each Tribe *divided* his Land among the Members of it, and *shared* it into particular *Properties*, proportionably to the Merit, or Number of the particular Families contained in it; and when any of these Tribes became too *numerous* and *burthensome* to the Land that was thus divided among them, they sent forth Colonies from among themselves, to take *Possession* of the next unpeopled Country bordering upon them; which when they had done, the *Leader* of the Colony divided it among his *Followers*: and so as they increased and multiplied, they spread themselves from Country to Country, till they had shared the World into *Nations*, and divided the *Nations* into distinct and particular *Properties*, and Families. And this Division was the *Original Law*,
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by which each Family claimed, as its *Property*, the Share that was allotted to it: and since the *Father* of Mankind was intitled by *God*, who is the *supreme Proprietor*, to all this Terrestrial Globe, he had an undoubted Right to *divide* it among the several Tribes that descended from him; and therefore since he impowered the *Heads* and *Princes* of his Tribes, to take *Possession* of such and such Portions, and *divide* it among their Families: not only each *particular Tribe* had an undoubted *Right* to the Portion allotted to it by him that was Head of them all, but each *particular Family* had an undoubted Right to the *Share* that was allotted to it, by him that was the *Head* of the Tribe it belonged to. And thus, you see, the first *Division* of the World among Men was the great *Law of Property*; and that whatsoever Men were possessed of by it, they had an undoubted *Right* and *Title* to: and upon this Law all the *Meums* and *Tuums*, the particular *Rights* and *Properties* that are now in the World are *founded*. For though in process of Time not only the *Tribes* and *Colonies* incroached upon one another, till the stronger by swallowing up the weaker grew into *Kingdoms* and *Empires*; but even the particular Families also of these *Tribes* and *Colonies* incroached upon each other, and either by Fraud or Oppression robbed their Neighbours of their *Original Share*; so that those Rights and Properties which were made by the *Primitive Divisions*, seem for the most Part, if not altogether, extinguished; yet it is to be considered, that the Laws now extant do suppose all *Alienations of Property* from the first Owners to have been made according to that *Original Law* of Division; which Law did not so *unalienably* entail on those Tribes
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and Families their appropriate *Shares*, but that they might either *sell* or *give* them away, or *forfeit* them: and if either of these Ways those Shares have passed through all successive Generations till now from Tribe to Tribe, or Family to Family, the *present Possessors* are justly intitled to them by that *Original Law* of Division. And that they have thus passed, *all Laws* now extant do suppose: the Law of *Nations* suppose those Countries, that are held by Right of *Conquest*, to have been justly *forfeited* to the Conqueror; and that unless they are so, his Conquest is *Robbery*, and not *Right*: the Municipal Laws of *Countries* do suppose the Estates of particular Families to be held by the Right of *Donation*, or *Purchase* from the true *Proprietor*, and that unless they are so, their first Possession was a *Theft* and not a *Right*: and therefore neither the Law of *Nations*, nor the Law of *Countries* do allow either Conquerors or *Families* to be *rightful Possessors* of their Conquests, and Estates, so long as there appears any *just Claim* against them. But though the first Possession should be obtained either by *unjust Conquest*, or by *Fraud* and *Oppression*; yet if it continue in the Lineage or Family of the unjust Possessor, till all *just Claim* against it be *extinguished*, the Law must suppose it to be obtained *justly*, because there *appears* no Evidence to the contrary. And indeed when a *Dominion*, or an *Estate*, which was at first unjustly obtained, hath been so long *successively* possessed, as that no Man can produce a *just Claim* and Title to it, it must be either the present Possessor's, or no bodies; but then when *God*, who is the *supreme Proprietor* of all, doth by his providential Permission continue

continue an *ill-got* Possession, till all lawful Claim to it is worn out, he doth thereby intitle the *present Possessor* to it, and creates it his *Right* and *Property*. For though God's *Providence* can be no Rule against his *revealed Will*, nor consequently can authorise any Man to possess what another hath a just Claim to, because his revealed Will forbids it: yet it is to be considered, that when no Man can justly claim what I possess, I wrong no Man in possessing it, and consequently am in no wise forbidden it by God's revealed Will; and therefore in this Case by his *Providential Continuance* of the Inheritance of it to me, he gives me free Leave to possess it; and that *Leave* is an implicit Conveyance of a just *Right* and *Title* to it. So that *legal Possession*, when there is no *just* or *legal Claim* against it, is an undoubted Right, a Right founded on the free Donation of God, who is the *Supreme Proprieter* of all things: and therefore *Justice* obliges us not to rob, or deprive Men of what they are intitled to by *Law*; nor to despoil any Man by *Stealth*, or strip him by *Violence*, or defraud him by *Craft* and cunning *Insinuation* of any *Right* or *Property* to which the *Law* intitles him; because by thus doing we do not only wrong Man of that Right which by *legal Conveyance* he derives from God, but we do also wrong God himself, by presuming to alienate his Bequests, and to reverse and cancel his Donations. For he who by *Stealth*, or *Robbery*, or *Fraud*, deprives another of his *Property*, doth impiously invade God's *Right* of bestowing his own where he pleases; and refuses to stand to that Division and Allotment which his *Providence* hath made in his own World: he doth in effect declare in his

Actions,

ACTIONS, that God hath nothing to do to share his World among his Creatures, that he will not endure him to reign Lord and Master in his own Family of Beings, nor allow *his Providence* to carve and distribute his own Bread and Meat among his Children; but that he will snatch from every one's Trencher, and carve what he pleases for himself out of every Man's Commons, and Allowance. So that to deprive another, you see, of what he is legally possessed of, is a high, and crying Injustice against God and Men: for he that will needs have more of God's Goods than God hath given him, is an *impious Robber* of God; and he that will needs have those Goods of God which he hath given to another, must be an *unjust Robber* of Man. If therefore we have injuriously deprived another of his legal Rights, we are bound by all the Ties of *Religion* towards God, and of *Honesty* towards Men, to make what *Restitution* we are able: for it is certain that my wrongful *Seizure* of what is another Man's doth not alienate his *Right* to it, so that he hath the same *Right* to it while I keep it from him, as he had at first when I took it from him, and consequently till I *restore* it back to him, I persist to wrong him of it; and my detaining it is a continued *Repetition* of that Fraud, or Theft, or Oppression, by which I wrongfully seized it. And whilst I thus persist in the *Sin*, the *Guilt* of it abides upon me; and I am justly responsible, to the Tribunal of Heaven, for being a Robber of God and Men. Whilst therefore I unjustly *detain* what is another's Right, I keep the Earnest-penny, which the Devil gave me, to intitle him to my Soul for ever; and so long as I possess the Spoils of my injured

jured Brother, I maintain so many *Evidences* to give Testimony against me, and to raise a Cry on me as high as the Tribunal of God.

C H A P. VI.

Of Justice in reference to the Rights acquired by Personal Endowments, or outward Rank.

III. **T**HERE are other *Rights* acquired by *Personal Accomplishments*, such as Wisdom and Learning, Integrity and Courage, Generosity and Goodness, which do naturally render Men exceeding useful and beneficial to the World; and therefore by these Men do acquire a just *Right* to be highly esteemed and honoured by all that know them. For Praise and Honour are the natural *Dues*, the Birthright and Patrimony of Excellency; which by its own inherent *Merit* challenges Esteem and Veneration: he who excels another, hath a *Right* to be preferred before him in the Esteem and Value of the World; to have his Light reflected with a more glorious Splendor, and his Excellencies re-founded with higher *Elogiums*. Now the Excellency of a Man consists in the Graces and Ornaments of his *Mind*; and as we do not esteem a Ship excellent, because it is curiously carved and inlaid, but because it is exactly fitted to all the Purposes of Navigation; as we do not account a Sword to be excellent, because it hath a rich Hilt, or embroidered Scabbard, but because it hath a keen

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Edge, a sharp Point, or good Guard and Temper: so none but Fools will esteem a Man to be excellent; because he hath a great Estate, or a comely Body, or wears fine Cloths, and rich Trappings; but because he hath a brave and a goodly *Mind*, a *Soul* well adorned with *Intellectual*, or moral Accomplishments. These are the Glories of the *Man*, whereas all the rest are only the Imbellishments of his *Case* and *Outside*. So that the true Stamp of Nobility is upon the *Minds* of Men; and consists in those *Graces* of Understanding and Will, whereby we represent and resemble *God*, who is the Pattern of *Excellency*, and the Fountain of *Honour*. So that true *Honour* is nothing else but a due Acknowledgment of the Excellencies of Men's Minds and Wills, or their own *Intellectual* or *Moral* Accomplishments echoed and reverberated upon them in just Acknowledgments and Commendations; which to withhold from one that truly *deserves* them, is great *Injustice* and *Disbonesty*. For he who detains from a worthy Person those honourable Acknowledgments that are *due* to his Virtues, robs *Virtue* itself of one of the fairest Jewels in her Diadem, and that is her *Honour* and *Glory*: he strips and despoils her of her Garments of Praise, steals from her her Native Rays and Lustre, and buries her alive in Darkness and Obscurity; and therefore since to rob a *virtuous Person* of his Honour and Reputation is so great an Outrage to *Virtue* itself, it must needs be highly *unjust* and *dishonest*. And herein consists the great Iniquity of *Detraction*, and of lessening, or debasing Mens deserved Praises and Commendation; which is a higher *Injustice* than to pick their Puries; for he

that clips or imbascs a Man's *Honour*; robs him of his best and dearest Property; and whilst he sucks the Veins of another's Reputation, to put Colour into the Cheeks of his own, he lives upon the *Spoils* of his Neighbour; and is every whit as injurious to him, as if he should pull down his House about his Ears to build himself another in its Ruins. And yet how common is this *unrighteous* Practice among Men; How doth this groveling *Serpent* lurk almost in every Hedge, to snap at the Heel of every noble Creature that passes by? Insomuch that a Man can hardly mention in any Company another Man's Excellencies, but presently some little *Viper* or other will be perking up to sting and spit Poison at him: and if he can say nothing against him, yet something he will seem to know, and with a crafty Nod and Shrug, a malicious Smile, or Sneer, suppress and conceal it: and if he chance to speak of another, what Care doth he take to stifle what may commend, and blazon what may shame and disgrace him; like the envious *Panther*, that shadows in dusky Colours all the graceful Parts and Features, but carefully exposes the Spots and Blemishes to open View. These, and a thousand other Tricks of *Detraction*, are frequently practised in all Conversations; but certainly did Men but consider what a *villainous Injustice* this is, and how much it provokes God, who will one Day make a strict Inquisition for Mens good *Names*, as well as for their *Blood*, they would never dare to allow themselves in such a crying Injustice towards one another.

IV. There are other *Rights* acquired by outward *Rank* and *Quality*, whether it be in respect
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of titular *Dignity*, or of *Wealth*, and large *Possessions*; by both which Men do acquire a Right to civil *Respect* and outward *Obeisance*. For as for the several Degrees of *Nobility*, *Titles* and Places of *Dignity*, by which Men are advanced above the vulgar Class into the upper Form of Mankind, they are so many Marks and Badges of Honour; by which the *King*, who is the Fountain of Honour, and who by smiling on a Clod of Earth can, with the *April* Sun, prefer it into a gay Flower, doth raise and ennoble Men, advance them into a higher Orb, a more illustrious Rank and Station in the World. Now though by virtue of this titular *Dignity*, we are no farther obliged to reverence or esteem Men, than their *Wisdom* or *Virtue* deserves; yet are we bound to give them their *due Titles*, and demean ourselves towards them with that outward *Preference*, *Observance*, and *Ceremony*, which their Degree and Quality requires; otherwise we rob them of those Rights, which the *King*, who is Master of outward *Respects* and *Precedencies*, hath bestowed upon them. For the *Royal Stamp* upon any kind of Metal gives it an *extrinſick* Value, and determines the Rate at which it is to pass among Coins; though it cannot raise its *intrinſick* Worth, nor make that which is but *Brass* to be but *Gold*. And as titular *Dignities* intitle Men to an outward *Respect* and *Observance*, so also doth *Wealth* and large *Possessions*: for these are Badges of Honour as well as the other, only the other we receive from the *King*, but these from the *King of Kings*. For when God bestows upon one Man a larger Fortune and Possession than on another, he doth thereby prefer and ad-

vance him into an higher *Sphere* and *Condition*; and when God hath set him above us, it is just and fit that we should rise and give place to him. And though a wise, or *virtuous* Poor Man hath more Right to our Esteem, than a *fortunate* Knave or Fool, who in all his Glory is but a Beast of Burthen in rich Trappings and *Caparisons*; yet forasmuch as in outward Rank and Condition God hath preferred the latter, he hath the *Rights* of Precedency, and of outward Respects and Observances, and ought to be treated with greater Obedience and Regard.

C H A P. VII.

Of Justice in reference to the Rights acquired by Compact.

V. **F***ifthly* and *Lastly*, There are other *Rights* acquired by *Bargaining* and *Compact*: for *Compacts* being a mutual transferring of Rights, wherein the Person with whom I bargain makes over such a Commodity to me for so much Money or other valuable Thing, the Right whereof I make over to him; we mutually owe this Right to one another, to deal truly and honestly in *making*, and sincerely and faithfully in *discharging*, our *Compacts* and mutual Engagements with each other. For since the End of Commerce, and buying and selling is *mutually* to assist and furnish one another with the Necessaries and Conveniencies of Life;
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both Buyer and Seller must thence have a Right accruing to them so to buy and sell, as that they may be *mutually* assisted by one another; as that the Buyer may have the Worth of his Price, and the Seller the Worth of his Commodity: for otherwise instead of mutually assisting, the one must necessarily depress and damnify the other. What the exact *Measure* is, which in Matter of buying and selling ought to be observed between Man and Man, is, I confess, a difficult Question, and hardly capable of being *nicely determined*; especially by us who are so little acquainted with the Affairs of the World, the Necessities of Things, and the particular and hidden Reasons of some Sorts of Traffick and Dealing: and therefore that I may not venture beyond my Depth in the Determination of this Matter, I shall only prescribe such general *Rules* of Righteousness to conduct our *Bargains* and *Contracts*, as being impartially applied to particular Cases, may secure Men from dealing wrongfully and injuriously with one another. And they are these; 1. Use *Plainness* and *Simplicity* in all your Dealings. 2. Impose upon no Man's *Ignorance* or *Unskilfulness*. 3. Take no Advantage of another's *Necessities*. 4. Subtract not from the *Commodity* or *Price*, for which you have contracted. 5. Go not to the *utmost* Verge of what thou conceivest to be *lawful*. 6. In doubtful Cases chuse the *safest* Part.

1. Use *Plainness* and *Simplicity* in all your Dealings: Do not, by disparaging *another* Man's Commodity, or over-valuing *your own*, endeavour to draw on an advantageous Bargain; neither ask far

beyond, nor bid much *below* the Worth of Commodities. Say not you cannot take less, or give more, when you know you may with fair Advantage and Profit. Pretend not what is *false*, cover not what is *true*; but so far as in you lyes, fit your Affirmations and Denials to the *Understanding* of the Person you deal with; and do not lye in Ambush behind your Words to trap and ensnare him. For in Bargains not only that which is *false* is unjust, but also that which *deceives*.

2. Impose upon no Man's *Ignorance* or *Unskilfulness*. Whilst you keep within the Latitude of lawful Gain, you may use your Skill against another Man in driving a Bargain; for in an ordinary *Plenty* of Commodities there is an ordinary *Price*, which those that deal in them know and understand; and when the Contractors equally *understand* the Price, there can be no Deception or Injustice on either Side. But if he whom I contract with be *ignorant* or *unskilful*, I must not rate his want of Understanding, or set a Tax upon his Ignorance, but use him not only *justly*, but *ingenuously*, as one that reposes a Trust in me, and casts himself upon my *Equity*; considering that to take Advantage from his *Simplicity* to abuse and defraud him, would be not only *Injustice* but *Inhumanity*.

3. Take no Advantage of another's *Necessities*. Do not wring and squeeze a poor Man when he is driven to your Doors by his *Wants*, and forced to sell his Wares to supply his *Necessities*; but give him the same Price you would have done, supposing he wanted your *Money* no more than you need his *Commodity*. And if the poor Man be forced to buy of you upon *Trust*, increase your Price no higher

higher than what is necessary to make you recompence for the *Loss*, which according to the Rules of Trade you must sustain by your *Forbearance*; reckoning in also the Hazards you run, which ought to be charitably as well as prudently estimated. For he who makes Advantage of another's Necessities, robs the Spittle, and adds Oppression to Misery; which is not only *Injustice* but *Barbarity*.

4. Substract not from the Commodity, or Price, for which you have contracted. For he who *buys* a Commodity by Weight and Measure, hath a Right to as much of it as the common Standard allows him; to have a full Standard, Pound, or Pint, or Bushel according as he bargains or contracts. And to substract any thing from what he hath bargained for, whether it be by *false* Weights or Measures, or by *falsly* weighing or measuring, is no better than *Theft* and *Robbery*. And so, on the other hand, he who *sells* a Commodity hath a Right to the Money for which he sold it; and therefore for the Buyer either *knowingly* to pay him uncurrent Coin, or *forcibly* to detain from him any Part of the Price agreed on, is a manifest *Violation* of the eternal Rules of Righteousness.

5. Go not to the *utmost* Verge of what you conceive to be *lawful*; for he who goes to the *utmost* of what is lawful, ventures to the Brink of a *Precipice*, where he stands in imminent Danger of falling headlong into it. For it is a short and easy Passage from the *utmost* Limits of what is *lawful*, to the nearest of what is *sinful*; so that he, that will go as far as he *may*, will never be able to avoid going sometimes farther than he *should*; especially when he is led on by *Interest*, and hath a tempting

Prospect of *Advantage* before him ; which is wont to blind the Eyes of Men, to warp their Judgment, to tincture their Minds with *false Colours* and *undue Apprehensions* of *Things*. Wherefore in that Latitude of *lawful Gain* which is allowed you, use Favour towards the *Poor* and *Necessitous*, Ingenuity towards the *Ignorant* and *Unskilful*, and Moderation towards *all*.

6. *Sixthly* and *Lastly*, In doubtful Cases chuse the *safest* Part: for not only a *good*, but a *quiet* Conscience is to be valued above the greatest Gain ; and that Man hath but little Regard of his Conscience that will venture to expose it to a Wound to get a Shilling more in a Bargain. Wherefore if we would be *safe*, we must make this a constant Rule of Action, in Matters of *Duty* to do the *most*, in Matters of *Privilege* and Divisions of Right, or Proportions of Gain, in all doubtful Cases, to chuse the *least*, which to be sure is always the *safest*. For if in buying and selling I make any Advantage, which I doubt is unlawful, I stake my Conscience at a Lottery, and throw Cross and Pile whether I shall be Guilty, or Innocent ; and thus to *play* and *dally* with my Innocence is but one Degree of Presumption from being *wilfully Guilty*.

These are the *General Rules* by which we ought to conduct ourselves in our *Compacts* and *Bargains*, if we mean to avoid that crying Sin of *defrauding* and *over-reaching* one another ; which how crafty and politick soever it may seem to Men that do not regard the Issue and Event of Things, it will in the End be found to be one of the greatest and most unprofitable *Follies*. For, alas ! while I am over-reaching my Brother in his *Estate*, there stands an *invi-*
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sible Cheat at my Elbow that is chousing me out of my *Heaven* and my *Soul*! So that, in fine, the whole Scene of Knavery resolves into this; the *Devil* is Angling with a less Fish to catch a greater, baiting his Hook with my *Brother's Property*, that so when I have taken and devoured *that*, he may take and devour *me*. And so I have done with the first thing proposed in handling this great and comprehensive Duty of *Justice*, or *Honesty* between Man and Man, which was to shew *what* it is, and how far it is extended.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the eternal Reasons of Justice.

I Proceed in the next Place to shew what those *eternal* and *immutable* Reasons are, which render Justice *morally* good. I have elsewhere shewed at large, that that which makes a thing to be *morally* Good is this, that its Obligation is founded in some *eternal* and *immutable* Reasons; so that we are obliged to practise it by such Reasons as can never cease or change, or alter with *Times* or *Circumstances*: and that this is the Difference between *positive* and *moral* Duties, that the one are founded upon *temporary* and *changeable* Reasons, and so may and will one time or other cease to oblige us; as the *Sacrifices* of the *Jews* have done, and the *Sacraments* of *Christians* will do; whereas the other, being backed with *everlasting* Reasons, can never

cease to oblige us. Wherefore to demonstrate *Justice* to be a *moral Duty*, or one of those *moral Goods* which God hath made known to us, it will be necessary to produce some *eternal* and *unchangeable* Reasons, whereby it binds and obliges us; and of such I shall produce these Four:

First, The eternal *Proportion* and *Congruity* of Justice to the Nature of *Things*.

Secondly, The eternal *Conformity* of it to the Nature of God.

Thirdly, The eternal *Correspondency* of it with the *Divine Providence* and *Disposals*.

Fourthly, The eternal *Necessity* of it to the Happiness of *Men*.

I. One *eternal Reason*, by which we stand obliged to do justly, is the eternal *Proportion* and *Congruity* of Justice to the Nature of *Things*. For there are in Nature eternal *Respects* of Things to Things, which are as fixed and unalterable as the *Nature* of the Things themselves: as for instance, some Things are naturally *more perfect* than others, such as the superior Kinds and Orders of Beings; others are naturally *equal* in Perfection, such as are Individuals of the same Kind of Beings; others are naturally *less perfect*, such as the inferior Ranks and Species of Beings; and since *Nature* hath thus ranked and placed Things either *above*, or *below*, or *equal* to one another; every Being in the World must naturally respect every one, either as it is *Superior*, or *Inferior*, or *Equal*: and these *Respects* are as inseparable to their Natures, as those *Degrees* of Perfection are which constitute their Kinds and Orders. So that were all the Beings in the World *Rational*, and understood but their mutual *Respects* and

and *Relations* to one another, they would thereby be *obliged* to demean themselves towards each other suitably to that Rank and Form of Being wherein Nature hath placed them; and by their Actions to acknowledge themselves *Superior*, or *Inferior*, or *Equal* to one another, according as they excel, or equal, or come short of one another in *Degrees* of natural Perfection. And herein consists the strict and proper Notion of doing *justly*, viz. in treating my Superiors, Inferiors, and Equals as such, in respecting my Equals equally, and my Superiors and Inferiors according to the Degree of Superiority and Inferiority wherein they are placed. So that *Justice* consists in acting congruously to those *eternal Respects*, which Things bear to one another; or in a practical Acknowledgment that the Beings above me, below me, and equal to me, do bear such a Respect to me as they really do; that they are just so much my Superiors, so much my Inferiors, or so much my Equals, as God and Nature hath made them. For among Beings that are capable of understanding those Respects and Relations they bear to one another, it is a *natural Due* that they should own another to be what they are, and mutually signify, by their Actions and Behaviour, what Respects and Relations they bear to one another; that by *Reverence* and *Submission* they should own those above them to be their Superiors; that by *Grace* and *Condescension* they should own those beneath them to be their Inferiors; and that by *Equity* or *Equality* of Usage and Behaviour, they should own those who are level with them to be their Peers and Equals. These are the natural Expressions of our Acknowledgment of those

those *mutual* Respects and Relations we bear to one another, which not to acknowledge is in effect to deny one another to be what we are, to thrust one another out of our *Places*, and invade each others *Rights* and *Peculiars*. So that, in short, *Justice* is nothing else but the great *Balance* of the rational World, which weighs out to every Part of it what is *due* from every one, in those respective *Ranks* and *Relations* wherein God and Nature hath placed them : and so long as there remains any *Proportion* of Nearness or Distance of Superiority, or Inferiority, or Equality, among rational Beings, that will be a firm and unanswerable Reason why they should deal *justly* and *righteously* towards one another; because *dealing justly* is nothing else but a practical Owning and Acknowledgment of these Respects and Relations; which so long as they continue, every Being must be obliged to acknowledge, that hath any Capacity to know and understand them. For since God hath given me Reason to understand that all those Beings which are of my own Kind and Order, are my *Equals* by Nature, I cannot but conclude that they ought to be *equally dealt* with ; since equal Things must necessarily belong to equal Beings in the same Circumstances. And from this Principle whereon that Golden Rule is founded, *to do as we would be done by*, all the particular Instances of Justice between Man and Man are naturally derived. So that the Obligations of Justice, you see, do immediately grow out of the *Nature* of Things, and those *Respects* and *Relations* they bear to one another : and therefore till the *Nature* of Things be utterly unravelled, and their *Respects* to one another for ever cancelled

cancelled and reversed, every rational Being must be obliged to be *just*; that is, to acknowledge, so far as he understands it, the *Respect* and *Relation* he bears to all *other* Beings; by demeaning himself submissively towards his Superiors, equally towards his Equals, and condescendingly towards his Inferiors. And whatsoever we are obliged to by the *Nature* of Things, we are obliged to by the *Author* of Nature; whose *Works* are as real Signs and Expressions of his Will, as his revealed *Declarations*: and therefore since *he* framed and constituted us with such Respect and Relations to one another, that is as plain a Signification that it is *his Will* we should demean ourselves accordingly, as if he had proclaimed it by a Voice of Thunder from the Battlements of Heaven. Since therefore God hath thus engraven the Obligations of Justice upon the *Nature* of Things, they must abide for ever, and be as Eternal as those *Respects* and *Relations* are which Things bear to one another.

II. Another eternal Reason by which we are obliged to do *justly*, is the Conformity of it to the Nature of God. For *Justice* is one of the brightest Jewels of God's Diadem, one of those most glorious *Attributes* which do eternally crown and adorn his Nature, and determine his Will, and direct his Actions. *Just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints*; Rev. v. 3. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy Judgments*, Psal. cxix. 137. *Are not my Ways equal, and are not your Ways unequal?* saith God himself, appealing to the Consciences of his Subjects, in Ezek. xviii. 29. Consonantly to all which is the Assertion of *Plato*, Θεὸς ἑδραμῇ ἑδραμῶς ἀδίκῃ. ἀλλ' ὡς οἶόν τε δικαιοτάτῃ. God cannot be said,

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to be unjust in any respect whatsoever, but is in all Kinds just to the utmost Possibility. And indeed the eternal *Self-sufficiency* of his own Nature sets him above all manner of Temptation to deal injuriously by his *Creatures*: he wants none of *their* Rights to enrich himself, needs none of *their* Happiness to augment *his own*; which is so boundless and secure, that it can neither admit of any Increase, or be liable to any Diminution. What then should move him either to *deprive* his *Creatures* of any Good that is their due, or to *inflict* on them any Evil that they have not deserved; when he can serve no End of his own, nor reap any Advantage to himself by it? for all Injustice springs out of *Want*, and *Indigence*; which being utterly excluded from the Nature of *God*, it is impossible there should be any unjust Inclination or Tendency in him. And as by the infinite *Self-sufficiency* of his Nature he is secured from all Temptation to Injustice, so by the infinite *Goodness* of it he stands unvariably bent and inclined to deal justly and righteously by his *Creatures*. For *Goodness* is nothing but an Inclination of Nature to bestow more Good than is *due*, and inflict less Evil than is *deserved*; which Inclination being inseparable to the Nature of *God*, it is impossible for him either to *with-hold* from us any Right, or to punish us *wrongfully*, without doing Violence to *himself*, and committing an Outrage on his own Nature. So that the *Nature* of *God* is a Law of Righteousness to himself, by which his Will and Actions are constantly determined to what is *just* and *equal*; to require nothing of us but what is *possible*, to proportion our Burthens to our Strength,

or

or our Strength to our Burthens, to satisfy all his Engagements to us, and not with-hold from us any of those Goods which we can claim by the Title of his gracious *Promises*; in a word, to proportion the Evils of our *Sufferings* to the Evils of our *Sin*, and not to plague us for nothing, or for what we cannot help, or beyond the *Guilt* and *Demerit* of our Fault: and whatsoever else is just from a *God* to a *Creature*, he is unchangeably determined to chuse and act by the Law of Righteousness in his own *Nature*. Since therefore the *Nature* of *God* is the great Exemplar and Pattern of all *Reasonable Natures*, as being itself the most *perfectly reasonable*; whatsoever is imitable in it we are eternally obliged to copy and transcribe into our own; and consequently since he is *eternally just*, that is an eternal Reason why we should be so. By dealing *justly* with one another, we act like *God*, whose *Nature* is the Standard of ours; and it is certainly fit that all *Reasonable Beings* should deal by one another, as *God*, who is the most reasonable, deals by them; that they should chuse and act in conformity to *him* who is the *Pattern* of Goodness, and the *Rule* of Perfection. And herein consists our Conformity to him, that we live by the Law of his *Nature*; and therefore so long as that Law determines him to deal justly by *us*, it ought to determine us to deal justly by *one another*. So that the Obligations of *Justice* are as eternal as the *Nature* of *God*; for so long as *he* is righteous, *we* are bound to be righteous in conformity to *him*; and therefore since *he* cannot cease to be righteous without ceasing to be happy and good, or which is all one,

to

to be *God*, *We* can never cease being obliged to be righteous so long as *God* is.

III. Another eternal Reason by which we are obliged to do *justly*, is the Agreement and Correspondency of it with the *Divine Providence* and *Disposals*. For God being the supreme Lord and Proprietor of Beings, all those Rights and Properties which we claim of one another must be *originally* derived from him; even as the Claims of the *Under-Tenants* are from the *Head-Landlord*. All those *Natural* Rights we are invested with, we derive from him who is the Author of our Nature; who by creating us what we are, and uniting us by natural Ligaments to one another, hath endowed us with all those Rights, which we claim as Rational Creatures dwelling in Mortal Bodies, and joined together by *natural Relations* and *Society*. So that to deal *justly* by one another, or with respect to our natural Rights, is only to allow one another what God hath entailed upon our Natures, and *mutually* to render those Dues to each other, which he hath entitled us to by the very *Frame* and *Condition* of our Beings: and for us to withhold from one another those Rights which God hath consigned to us by the *State* and *Formation* of our *Natures*, is to quarrel with his Workmanship, and declare ourselves dissatisfied with the State of his Creation. For whatsoever I have a Right to as I am a *Man*, I have a Right to by the State and Condition of my *Nature*; and therefore he who allows me not *that*, allows me not to be what *God* hath made me; permits me not to enjoy that State and Condition of Nature wherein God hath created and placed me. For whatsoever

soever I have Right to as I am a *Man*, I have a Right to from *God* who made me a *Man*; and therefore he who denies me the Right of my *Nature*, thrusts me down from the Form wherein *God* hath placed me, and uses me as if I *were not* what *God* hath made me; whereby he doth in effect fly in the Face of my Creator, and quarrel with *God* for making me what I am. In a word, it is *eternally reasonable* that I who am the Creature of *God*, should pay so much Reverence to his all-creating Wisdom and Power, as to treat every Creature suitably to the *Stâte* and *Condition* of its Creation; and consequently to treat *Men* as *Men*, that is, as Beings endowed by *God* with the common Rights of Human Nature; which if I do not, I alienate from my own Kind what *God* hath endowed it with, and so in effect do disallow of *his* Endowments, and impiously call in question the Rights of *his* Creation. For either I must own that *God* ought not to have constituted Human Nature with such *Rights*, which would be to impeach his Creation; or that I ought to render it those *Rights* which result from its Frame and Constitution: and therefore when by my Actions I disown that I *ought* to render them, I do in effect quarrel with *God's* Creation for entailing such Rights upon Human Nature, and declare that I am resolved not to be concluded by it; but that I will for ever defy the *Laws* of the Creation, and will not abide by that *Rule* and *Order* which it hath established in the Nature of Things. If therefore it be reasonable, eternally reasonable for Creatures to act agreeably to the *Order* of their Creation;

this is an eternal Reason why we should render to one another those Rights which God hath bequeathed to us by the Constitution of our *Natures*.

And as our Natural Rights are derived to us from God by his *Creation*, so are our acquired also derived from him by his *Providence*: who having reserved to himself the Sovereign Disposal of all our Affairs, is our *Founder* and *Benefactor*, upon whom we all depend for every *Right* and *Property* we acquire by our Conversation and Intercourse with one another: and that this is *mine*, and that *yours*, is owing to the *Providence* of God, which carves out to every one his Portion of Right, and divides as *he* sees fit his World among his Creatures. So that Justice, as it refers to *acquired Rights*, consists in allowing every Man to enjoy what God hath given him by his all-disposing Providence: and if God hath an eternal Right to *share* his own Goods among his own Creatures as he pleases, then that is an eternal Reason why we should allow one another to enjoy those *Portions* which he hath shared and divided to us. For by depriving another Man of what God's Providence hath given him, I do not only rob *him* of his Right to enjoy it, but I also rob *God* of his Right to dispose it. For while I withhold or take away what God hath given to another, I take *his* Goods against his Leave, and impiously invade *his Province* of bestowing his own where he pleases: and whilst I thus carve for *myself*, out of those Allowances which he hath carved to *others*, I live in open *Rebellion* against his Providence, and am an Out-law to his Government. For this in effect is the Sense and Meaning of my
wrongful

wrongful Incroachments upon other Mens Rights, that I will not be concluded by that Division and Allotment of Things which *God* hath made; but that I will divide and carve for *myself*, and live at my own Allowance; that I will not suffer him to share his *own World*, nor endure him to reign Lord and Master in his *own Family* of Beings, but even live as I list, and take what I can catch without asking *God's* Leave, who is the supreme Proprietor and Disposer. So that to deal unjustly by *Men*, whether it be in respect of their *natural*, or *acquired* Rights, is a direct Opposition to the *divine* Ordination and Disposal; and therefore if it be eternally reasonable for us who are *God's Creatures* and *Subjects*, to comply with the Order of his *Creation* and the Disposals of his *Providence*, that is an eternal Reason why we should deal *justly* with one another.

IV. *Fourthly* and *lastly*, another eternal Reason why we are obliged to do *justly*, is the everlasting *Necessity* of it to the Happiness of Men: For *Justice* is the Pillar and Support of all *Society*, without which, it is impossible for *rational Beings* ever to live happily with one another. For while I deal unjustly by *others*, I draw all Men into a Combination against me; who having all the same tender Sense of their own Interest and Happiness as I have of mine, must be sufficiently jealous of all Designs and Incroachments on their *Rights* and *Properties*; and consequently be ready to conclude from my Injustice towards *one*, that I am prepared to do Mischief to *many* for the Advancement of my own End: so that when once I am remarked for a Person that bears no regard to *Right* and *Wrong*,

it becomes the joint and equal Interest of *all* to declare open War against *me*, and treat me as an open Enemy without Mercy and Compassion. So that one *unjust* Man in a Society is a *common Disturbance* to all the rest; for by every *single* Injury he doth, he alarms the Jealousy of *every* Man, every Man having Reason to conclude that he shall be served by him in the *same* Kind, if he should happen to fall into the *same* Circumstances: and as he disturbs *others*, so he cannot securely enjoy *himself*; for how can that Man be secure that acts as an Enemy to Mankind, and for that Reason hath just Cause to suspect that every Man is his Enemy who is conscious to his injurious Behaviour? The *Fear* of which must necessarily deprive him of all *Satisfaction* for the present, and of all *Security* for the future. So that unjust Persons are a *Plague* to themselves, and others; and like frightened *Porcupines* they are disturbed *within*, whilst they dart their Quills at all *without* them. What a dark rude *Chaos* then would this reasonable World be, should *Justice* and *Righteousness* forsake it; should Rapine and Violence, Falshood and Oppression reign, and the strongest Arm be sole Arbitrator of Right and Wrong; should all *Promises* and *Professions* be converted into *Traps* and *Snares*; and every Man lay Ambushes in his Words, and lurk behind them in *reserved* Meanings, only to wait an Opportunity to surprize and ruin every one he converses with? What would the Consequence of this be, but the disbanding of all *Society*, and the converting of this human World into a Den of *Wolves* and *Cannibals*? For by Reason of Mens continued Experience of each others *Falshood* and *Insincerity*, all *mutual* Trust and Confidence would be

be banished from among them; and every one would be forced to stand upon his Guard, in a constant Expectation of Mischief from every one; and so all their Intercourse would consist in a Trade of *Diabolical Knaveries*, in doing and retaliating Injuries, and in circumventing and playing the Devils with one another. Which would be such a dreadful State of Things, that I verily believe were it left to my own Option, I should rather chuse to languish out an Eternity in some *dismal Dungeon* alone, and there converse only with my own silent Griefs, than to dwell for ever in the *Garden* of the World, accompanied with such *false* and *villainous* Creatures. But now, do but turn the other End of the Perspective, and imagine that you saw *Judgment running down like Water, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream*, that you beheld a World of *upright People* balancing all their Actions and Intercourses in the impartial Scale of *Justice*, and mutually weighing to one another their *natural* and *acquired Rights* without any Respect or Partiality, the *Superiors* graciously condescending, the *Inferiors* chearfully submitting, and the *Equals* dealing equally with one another: O good God! what a blessed and happy People would this be? With what *Content* and *Satisfaction*, *Peace* and mutual *Security* would they deal and converse with one another? Here would be no Quarrels or Contentions, no Jealousies or Suspicions, no dark Designs or false Pretences; but every one would converse with every one with the greatest Openness and Freedom, and all would be inviolably safe in each others *Sincerity* and *Justice*: Here would be no jostling or rencountring, no clashing or interfering of Interests; but every one would sit

happy and contented under his own Vine without any unjust *Desire* of trespassing on his *Neighbour's* Inclosure, or disquieting *Fear* of being ejected from *his own*. O! were I but an Inhabitant of such a World as *this*, though of the lowest Rank and Form; how should I despise and pity the most prosperous Circumstances of this unrighteous World we live in? And how loath should I be to change my World for any other, but that of *Angels* and of glorified *Spirits*? O *Justice, Justice*, would Men but call Thee down from Heaven again, and permit Thee to rule and govern their Actions, into what a blessed World wouldst thou convert this Stage of Rapine, Cruelty and Blood! How wouldst thou separate this dark Chaos, and distinguish its Confusions into Order and Beauty! How soon wouldst thou reform it into an Emblem of Heaven, or lively Figure of that Celestial *Æther*, where all is *Harmony*, and *Light*, and *Peace*, and *Love*, and *Happiness*! If therefore it be eternally reasonable that Men should study their own Happiness, that is an everlasting Reason why they should deal *justly* by one another; since without so doing it is for ever *impossible* for them to be *happy*. These are the eternal and immutable Reasons, which constitute Justice a *Moral Good*, and do eternally oblige us to deal *justly* by one another.

And now what remains, but that we betake ourselves to the conscientious Practice of this great and *comprehensive* Virtue, to give to every Man what is *due* to him, either by *Constitution*, or by just *Acquisition*; to deal with every Man with whom we have any Intercourse, as with a *Rational* Creature;

ture; to treat him *equitably*, and do him all that good which we might reasonably expect from him, if *we* were placed in his Circumstances; to allow him the Liberty to *judge for himself*, so far as he is capable, and not endeavour to impose our Opinions upon him by *violent* and *forcible* Means; to leave him at Liberty to follow the Dictates of *right Reason*, and not seek to debauch him by Persuasion or Threatning, into *immoral* and *vicious* Courses; to treat him humanely and suitably to the *Dignity* of his *Nature*, and not use him like a Dog, or as if he were an Animal of an inferior *Species*? For all those things are due to him as he is a *Rational* Creature, and cannot be denied to him without high *Injustice*. Again, to deal with him as he is a *Rational* Creature placed by God in a *mortal Body*; and neither to *ravish* his Body to satisfy our Lust, nor to *maim* or *destroy* it, unless it be in our own Defence; nor to *captivate* and *enslave* it, unless it be upon free Consent, or upon just Forfeiture; nor to suffer it to *perish* for Want of bodily Sustenance, so long as it is in our Power to support and relieve it. These things he hath a Claim to, as he is the *Tenant* of God, and cannot be denied without foul *Injustice*. Once more; to use him as a *Rational* Creature united to me by *natural Relations*; if he be my *Father*, to honour, and reverence, and obey him; if he be my *Child*, to love and instruct him, maintain and provide for him; if my *Brother* or *Sister*, or consanguineous *Relation*, to cherish and advise, support and assist him according to my Ability. These are the *Dues* of *Natural Relation*, and cannot be withheld without great *Unrighteousness*. *Lastly*, To treat him as one whom God and Nature hath united to me in the Bands of *human Society*,

ciety, to love him, and live peaceably with him, to speak *Truth* to him, and when I am lawfully called, to swear nothing but *Truth* concerning him, and perform my Promises and Oaths to him, so far as it is lawful and possible; not to blast his *Reputation*, but to defend his Person, Good Name and Estate, so far as I am able, and to allow him a Competent Share of all those Profits which accrue to me from my *Dealing* and *Intercourse* with him. These are the *natural Dues* which Justice requires me to render him, and which I cannot withhold from him without being injurious to the Human Nature within him. And as I am obliged in Justice to render to every one his *natural Dues*, so I am no less obliged by it to render him his *acquired* ones; to render him whatsoever is due to him upon the Account of any Sacred, or Civil *Relation* to me; not to intrench upon his legal *Possessions* either by Fraud or Violence; to render him those *Honours* and *Respects* which are owing to his Personal Accomplishments; or to his outward Rank and Quality; and not to defraud, oppress, or over-reach him in his *Contracts* and *Bargains* with me. These are the Particulars, as I have shewed you at large, to which this *comprehensive Virtue* extends itself; and Oh! that now having seen upon what *everlasting Reasons* it is built, we would be persuaded to betake ourselves to the serious *Practice* of it.

C H A P. IX.

Of the Sinfulness, and Unreasonableness of Injustice.

AFTER the Explication of the immutable Reasons, and Grounds of *Justice*, it may be proper to add some Motives, and Considerations against *Injustice*.

And First, Consider the great Repugnancy of *Injustice* to the Terms and Conditions of the *Christian Religion*. I know there are some People that look upon *Honesty* and *Justice* as one of the *beggarly Elements* of Religion, a sort of Heathen Virtue belonging to *carnal* and mere *moral* Men, that are utterly unacquainted with the *Spirit* and *Power* of Godliness: and accordingly in the Room of this, and such like Moral Virtues, they have foisted in a Sort of *spiritual* Religion, as they call it; which consists in a certain *Model* of Conversion and Regeneration, that is made up of nothing but a mere *fanciful* Train of *Dejections* and *Triumphs*, that are most commonly either the Effects of a distempered *Blood*, or the unaccountable Freaks of an overheated *Fancy*: and if they find they have been converted *secundùm Artem*, *i. e.* that they have undergone those frightful, sorrowful, or joyous Passions, which this stated *Method* of Regeneration includes, all their After-Religion is nothing else but a *leaning* and *rolling* on *Jesus Christ*. And whilst they should be governing their Wills, their
Tongues,

Tongues, and their Actions by the eternal Rules of *Justice* and *Goodness*, they are employed, as they think, in a *higher* Dispensation ; in forming odd Schemes of spiritual Experiences, and attending to the inward Whispers, and Incomes, and With-drawings of the Spirit of God ; all which are commonly nothing but only the Effects of a melancholy *Fancy* tinged with religious Fears, and flushed with a natural *Enthusiasm*. But whatever it be, it is doubtless a *dangerous Mistake* for Men to take up with any Religion, which doth not principally insist upon the *eternal Laws* of Morality : and though *Justice* or *Honesty* in our Dealings with Men will never *singly* recommend us to God, unless it be conjoined with *Mercy*, *Sobriety*, and *Godliness* ; yea though all these *together* will never recommend us to God, unless their Imperfections be purged and expiated by the all-sufficient Merit of our blessed Saviour ; yet without *Justice* and *Honesty*, all our Religion is a damnable *Cheat* ; and all the Merit of our Saviour will be as insignificant to *us*, as it is to the *Devils*, or *damned Ghosts*. For his Merit is no Refuge for religious Knaves, his Wounds no Sanctuary for spiritual Cheats, or Lyars, or Oppressors : and for such Persons as *these*, to shelter themselves in our Saviour's Propitiation, is to *prophane* and *desecrate* it ; and thereby to cause those vocal Wounds to *accuse* them, which were made to *plead* for them ; and to provoke that *eloquent* Blood to cry aloud for Vengeance against them, which in its native Language *speaketh far better things than the Blood of Abel*, Heb. xii. 24. For *Justice* is a Duty of that indispensable Necessity, that God *will not*, yea, to speak with Reverence, *cannot* dispense with it :
and

and so far was our Saviour from ever designing to obtain a *Dispensation* from it, that the great End of his dying to obtain our Pardon for our past Unrighteousness, was to encourage and oblige us to live more justly and righteously for the future. For so the Apostle tells us, Tit. ii. 14. *That he gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*; and notwithstanding all, that he hath done for us, he hath plainly assured us by his Apostles, that no *unrighteous* Person shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 9. and that the *Unjust* shall be reserved unto the Day of Judgment to be punished, 2 Pet. ii. 9. That the *Wrath of God* is revealed from Heaven against all *Unrighteousness of Men*, Rom. i. 18. and that they all shall be damned that take Pleasure in *Unrighteousness*, 2 Theff. ii. 12. And if these things be so, then as ever you hope to enter into the Kingdom of God, to escape his unquenchable Wrath, to hold up your Heads at his Tribunal, and not to be condemned to everlasting Horror and Confusion, be persuaded to *fly from all Unrighteousness*, and use all honest Care to deal justly and righteously with all Men.

II. Consider the great Vanity, or Desperateness of *Injustice*: for if the Wrong and Injustice you do to another Man be such as is *repairable*, you must resolve to *repair* it, or to *perish* for ever. For he who doth *not* repair an Injury when he is able, doth every Moment *continue* and *repeat* it; and though the first injurious Act were *transient*, and did expire and die in the Commission, yet because it leaves a *permanent Evil* behind it upon the good Name, or Estate of my Neighbour, I am as much obliged,

obliged, if I be able, to *remove* the Evil from him, as I was at first *not* to *bring* it upon him; and all the while I *neglect* to remove it, I wilfully *continue* the Evil upon him, and in so doing *continue* wilfully *injurious* to him. As for Instance, When I wilfully asperse another Man's *Reputation*, my *Sin* dies not with my slanderous Breath, but *survives* in the evil Effects of it; and till I have endeavoured to *purge* his stained Reputation, and to *restore* him his good Name again by a fair and ingenuous *Vindication*, I am a Slanderer *still*, and accountable for all those hard Thoughts, and injurious Words which I have *occasioned* others to think or speak against him. Again, When I *rob*, or *defraud* another Man of his Estate, or any Part of it, the Sin doth not cease with the *transient Act* of Stealth, or Cozenage, or Violence, which ends and expires in the Commission; but *continues* so long as the *Damage* and *evil Effect* of it remains: Whilst therefore he suffers in his Estate by my injurious Act, and it is in my Power to *repair* it, I continue injuring him; and till I have made him all the *Restitution* I am able, I am a Cheat, or a Thief, or a Robber. Since therefore Injustice is a damnable Sin, as I shewed you before, it necessarily follows, that whenever a Man deals unjustly by another, he must at the same Time either resolve to *undo* his own Act, or to run the Hazard of being *undone* for ever; the former of which is a ridiculous *Vanity*, and the latter a desperate *Madness*. For what a *Vanity* is it, for a Man to *do* what he resolves to *undo*, to *slander* with a Purpose to *vindicate*, and *cheat* with a Resolution to *refund*, that is, to do an evil Thing with a Purpose to be never the better

better for it? If you resolve to *restore* what you wrongfully take from another, why do you *take* it? Is it so cheap a Matter to be wicked, that you should covet to be wicked for *nothing*? That you should contract a *Guilt* which will bind you over to eternal *Punishment*, with an Intention to *part* with all that temporary Gain which *tempted* and *invited* you to it? What is this but to weave a *Penelope's* Web, to do and undo, and build Castles of Cards, to blow them down again? and, which is more vain and nonsensical, to *swallow* deadly *Poison* for our Health and Ease, which we know will rack and convulse us, with a Purpose to *vomit* it up again without gaining either Health, or Ease by it? For he who wrongs another with a Purpose to make him *Restitution*, doth an evil Action with an Intent to get nothing but *Guilt* by it. You say, you intend to *restore* to him what you *wrong* him of, and if so, for what *End* do you wrong him? unless it be to render yourself more Criminal and Guilty: For when you have restored to him what you have wrongfully deprived him of, what can remain to you but only the Guilt of a *wrongful* and *injurious* Action? so that for Men to deal unjustly by others with an *Intent* to make them *Restitution*, is the greatest Vanity and Nonsense in the World; but then to do it without such an Intent, is the most desperate Madness. For since every wilful Act of *Injustice* binds Men over to eternal Punishment, and since nothing but *Restitution*, so far as they are able, can release and absolve them from that dire Obligation; it necessarily follows, that he who deals unjustly by others, without any Intent of making them *Restitution*, doth by his *own Act* wilfully oblige himself

himself to endure an eternal Punishment. For he knows that what he gains *unjustly* from another must be *restored*, or his *Soul* must be lost; and therefore if he resolve upon that Gain without any Intent to *restore* it, he doth in Effect stake his *Soul* to it and freely oblige himself to endure Hell-fire for ever, in Consideration of the *present Gain* he acquires by his unjust Dealing. For he who knows that such a *Potion*, however sweetened and made palatable is compounded with the Juice of deadly *Nightshade*, and yet wilfully swallows it without any Intent to disgorge it again, doth thereby *voluntarily* murder and destroy Himself: and so He who knows that such an *unjust Gain*, how tempting soever it may look for the present, hath an everlasting *Horror* and *Anguish* intermingled with it, and yet wilfully *seizes* it without any Intent to *refund* it; doth freely consent to undergo the *Evil* to enjoy the *Good* of it, and shake Hands upon this desperate Bargain, that upon Condition he may reap such an *unlawful Profit*, he will freely surrender up his *immortal Soul* to the Pains and Agonies of *eternal Death*. For in every Temptation to deal unjustly the *Devil* cheapens our immortal Soul, and the *unlawful Gain* with which he tempts us is the *Price* he bids for it: and though sometimes he bids exceeding *low*, yet if we take his Price, though it be but a *Penny*, we thereby strike the fatal *Bargain*, and by our own Act and Deed consign and deliver our *Souls* to him to be his Slaves *here*, and his Martyrs *hereafter*. And what greater Madness can a Man be guilty of, than to sell his *Soul* and all his Hopes of *Happiness* for ever, for the trifling and momentary Gains of an *unjust Action*?

III. Consider the manifest *Inexcusableness* of *Injustice* in it self: For, as I have shewn you at large, all Justice between Man and Man is reducible to that general Rule, *Do as you would be done by; i. e.* Do all that good to others, which you could reasonably expect they should do to you, if you were in their Circumstances, and they in your's: and this is so plain a Rule, that no Man can plead *Ignorance* of it, who doth not wilfully shut his own Eyes. It is true, whilst *Laws*, though never so plain and useful in themselves, are yet *obscure* and *perplexed* in their Promulgation, or *over-numerous*, they may prove a Snare rather than a Guide, and make more Controversies than they can decide, and lose much of their Force by being spun out into nice and *subtile* Disputes: they may fall *short* of their Aim, by not being able to reach the greater Part of those Persons whom they designed to direct; who either have not *Leisure* sufficient to attend to, or *Capacities* to understand them, or *Sagacity* to apply them in all Opportunities of Action. But as for this *General Rule* of Justice, it is always at Hand, and we carry it about us in our own Breasts: for this is the *peculiar* Advantage of this Rule, that by it we may very *easily* discern all the Specialties of our Duty, without looking abroad, or having Recourse to external Instructions. So that by it we may be perfect Lawgivers, skilful Judges, and faithful Casuists to our *own Souls*: For it is legible to those that have no *Letters*, and lies open and obvious to the most *Rude* and *Ignorant*. We need not search ancient *Records*, or dark *Repositories*, revolve and ruminate upon old *Sentences*, or new *Glosses*, or rove about the World to examine

mine the various *Customs* and *Constitutions* of Countries: we need not soar to *Heaven*, or dive to *Hell* in Quest of our Duty; for if we will but return into *ourselves*, and look into our own *Hearts*, there we may find it copied and ingraven in *legible Characters*. For when any Opportunity of Dealing justly by *another* presents itself to us, it is but asking *ourselves* how we should be dealt by in the *same* Circumstances; and our *Answer* to that is our *Duty* to those we deal with: I know very well how I should *expect* to be used if my Neighbour and I had *changed Persons* and Circumstances: my own Heart tells me, that I should think it reasonable to expect *such Measures* from *him*, and that therefore he hath just Reason to expect the *same* from *me*. So that in most Cases of Justice between Man and Man, every Man, if he pleases, may be his *own* Casuist: for it is but *exchanging* Persons, and Circumstances with his *Neighbour*, which is quickly done, and then applying this *General Rule* to his particular Dealings with him; and his *own Heart* will soon tell him what he is to do, and very rarely, but never grossly, misinform him. For by thus *changing* the Scales, and making *another* Man's Case my *own*, I take the fairest and readiest Way to understand what is *right* and *due* to him: for now to be sure my *Passion*, and *Self-interest* will not incline me one Way more than another; and even that *Selfishness*, which inclines me to wrong *another* Man for my *own* Advantage, will likewise render me unwilling, when the Scales are *changed*, that *another* Man should wrong me? and that *Self-conceit*, which makes me apt to scorn and despise *another*, will make me unwilling to be scorned and despised *myself*; and so
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when I consult myself how I would be dealt by, those very *Passions* which incline me to *wrong others* will instruct me to *right them*. So that there is no *Rule* in the World can be pressed with fewer *Incumbrances*, or darkned with less *Intricacy*; none that can lie open to larger *Use*, or be readier to present *Application*, or more obvious to all Sizes of *Apprehension* than This, which is the *Measure* and *Standard* of our Dealings and Intercourses with one another. So that there is no pleading *Ignorance* to excuse or palliate any great Violations of the Laws of Righteousness; since in all Matters of Moment every Man may easily understand how he ought to deal by every Man, if he would but take care to consult the Oracle in his *own Breast*, and ask himself how he would expect to be dealt by, were he placed in the Circumstances of those he deals with. And when Men won't *understand* their Duty, when it lies so plainly before them; or won't *do* their Duty, when they do *understand* it; what Colour of Excuse can be made for them? Were the *Rule* of our Duty so *obscure* as that we could not easily apprehend it, the Weakness of our *Understanding* might partly excuse the Error of our *Wills*, and render it *pitiable* and *pardonable*, though not altogether *innocent*; but when it lies so *full* in our *View* as that we cannot but discern it, if we will but open our Eyes, and fairly consult our own Minds and Thoughts, our *Understanding* is acquitted, and our *Will* only is chargeable with our Folly, and Wickedness: So that now we sin at our *own* Peril, and leap headlong into Mischief with our Eyes open. But as for *Injustice*, the Guilt of it is

so open and so visible, that however our other Sins may be excused by our *Ignorance*, and mitigated or connived at upon the Score of the *natural Defects* of our *Understanding*, this can admit of no Cloak, or Extenuation; because whenever a Man deals unjustly by another, his *Conscience* will be sure to tell him (if he puts the Question to it) that he would not be so dealt with, were the Case and Circumstances *his own*. So that when we come to give up our Accounts at the *Tribunal of God*, and to answer for our unrighteous Dealings with one another, they will so stare us in the Face, that we shall be able to make no Excuse or Apology for them; but our own Consciences will be forced to cry *Guilty, Guilty*, to anticipate our Doom; and when it is past, to approve and second it with a *Just and righteous art thou, O Lord, in all thy Ways*. For when the *Rule of Justice* lies so very plain and open to our very *Faculties*, what can be said if we do unjustly, but that we are obstinate, and wilful, and incorrigible *Robbers*, that can claim no Indulgence, deserve no Pity, and pretend to no Mitigation of our Stripes, since we *knew* our Master's Will and *did it not*?

IV. Consider the *Fruitlessnes* and *Mischievousnes* of unjust Dealing to *ourselves*. For the usual Bait of Injustice is *Gain* and *Profit*, we deplume our *Neighbour's* Wings with an Intent to feather *our own Nests*, and invade *other* Mens Properties to enrich *ourselves* with their Spoils: This is the *common Game* that Fraud and Oppression pursues and flies at, though usually they fly short or beyond it, and instead of enriching Men, do finally damage and impoverish them. For how successful soever un-just

just Dealing may sometimes prove to the *raising* a Man's Fortune and Estate, 'tis in its natural Tendency an effectual Way to *impair* and *ruin* it, because by dealing unjustly he makes it every Man's Interest to forsake and abandon him, and in Effect sets a Cross upon his own Door to warn all Customers from entring. For who would willingly have to do with a *Knave*, that always lies upon the Catch, waiting Opportunities to rook and cozen him ; with whom he can neither speak, nor act securely, but must be forced to stand upon his own *Guard* with him, and treat him with the same *Circumspection* and *Cautiousness* as Conjurers do their Devils, for fear of being snapt and torn in Pieces by him ? And how is it possible for a Man to *thrive*, when no Body cares to deal with him ; when his House is haunted, and his *Frauds* and *Cozenages* appear like Spectres at his Door, to frighten all Men from his Shop and Conversation ? And accordingly you see that Justice and Honesty in Dealing is so *absolutely necessary* to Mens thriving in the World ; that even they who *are* not honest are fain to *seem* so : but for a Man to *seem* to be honest there is no Way so certain and secure, as to be *really* so ; for if he be not, it is a thousand to one but the Events of things will, one Time or other, unmask and discover him. No Man can be secure of *Privacy* in an unjust Action, but let him carry it never so secretly and demurely, one Accident or other will draw the Curtain, and bring to Light the *Fraud* and *Villainy* behind it : and when it doth, what will Men say ? *He has cheated me once, and that was his Fault, but if he cheat me again it will be mine as well as his ; and I shall richly deserve the second Wrong, if I*

will take no *Warning* by the first. So that how much soever a Man may gain by a *present* Cheat, he is sure, if he be discovered, to lose his Correspondent, by whom in a few Years he might have honestly gotten ten Times more: Besides that, either his *Resentment* of the Injury he hath received, or else his *Charity* to others, will oblige him to *divulge* the Knavery, and to *warn others* by it not to have any thing to do with the detected Knave that wronged and abused him. And when once a Man's *Credit* is blasted by the Report of a foul and dishonest Action, it is a thousand to one but he will lose back in his *Trade* all that he gained by his *Cheat*, and twenty Times more; and then if once he begin to sink, there is no Recovering of him; for *Estate* and *Credit* are the two Wings that bear Men up in the World, and therefore if when he hath clipt the Wings of his *Credit*, his *Estate* should fail him too, he must decline and sink without Remedy. For *Credit* is like a *Looking-Glass*, which when only *sullied* by an unwholesome Breath may be wiped clean again; but if once it is *cracked*, it is never to be repaired. So that considering all, Fraud and Injustice is as great an Error in *Politicks*, as in *Morals*, and doth bespeak a Man to have as little *Wit*, as *Honesty*; and in plain *English*, to be as much a *Fool*, as a *Knave*. But suppose the best, and that which sometimes happens, that a Man should *thrive* by his *Fraud* and *Injustice*, and grow *great* and *prosperous* in the World; alas! what *Comfort* can he take in his ill-gotten Wealth; when every Part of it throws Guilt in his Face, and awakens some dire Reflection in his *Conscience*? For, as I shewed you before, of all Sins that of *Injustice* admits the least

Excuse

Excuse and Mitigation; the Sense of it clings so close to a Man's *Conscience*, that he can never pluck it off without pulling away his Conscience with it, and rooting out of his Mind all the Sense of *Religion*, and of *Good and Evil*. So that unless the Man turn an assured *Atheist* or a stupid *Sot*, it will be impossible for him to enjoy his unjust Possessions, without great *Recoilings* and *Convulsions* of Conscience; because his unjust Possessions will, like the Adulterer's Bastard, be a *standing Reproach* to him, and a perpetual *Remembrancer* of his Guilt and Shame. And when that which a Man enjoys and lives upon, when the Meat which he gluts, and the Drink which he guzzles, the Cloaths which he rustles and flaunts in, shall thus *reproach* and *upbraid* him; O wretched Man! We are the Price of thy *Innocence*, thy *Soul*, and thy *eternal Happiness*; for us thou hast damned thyself, and freely consigned thy immortal Spirit to everlasting Horror and Confusion; when his Bags and Coffers cry Guilty, Guilty, and he sees a *Mene Tekel* on the Walls of every Room in his House, and every thing he enjoys *whispers* some Accusation against him; what *Comfort* can he take in the Purchase of his Frauds and Oppressions? Were it not a thousand Times better for him to have lived contentedly on a brown Morsel, than thus to fare deliciously every Day with a *vexed* and a *tormented* Mind? And yet this is commonly the Fate of *unjust Possessors*, who, under the Disguise of a *cheerful* Countenance, too commonly wear *woful* Hearts, and like Tragedies bound in gilded Covers, are only gay and splendid *without*, but full of Stabs and Wounds *within*. But suppose that in a continued Tumult of

Excesses and Riots, they should make a Shift, whilst they *live*, to drown the Cries of their guilty Consciences; yet, in all Probability, whenever *Death* threatens, or approaches them in a Disease, and sets them within Ken of Eternity, their *Conscience*, in Despite of them, will *rouze*, and *awake*, and raise a hideous *Outcry* against them: for now their *Last Will and Testament* will set before them a woful Catalogue of uncanceled Guilts, and every ill-gotten Penny they have there bequeathed will put them in Mind of their approaching *Damnation*, and dictate *Dread* and *Horror* to their Consciences, which in a desperate Rage will fly in their Faces, and tell them to their Teeth that they are *Cheats*, and *Knaves*, and *Reprobates*; that their *Legacies* are the Fruits of their *Sins*, the Purchase of their *Frauds* and *Oppressions*; and that for that which they are now bequeathing to *others*, they have long ago bequeathed their *Soul* to the Devil, who now stands ready to seize on it, and carry it away to those dark Prisons of Horror where he keeps his miserable Slaves, under a dreadful Expectation of their *eternal Judgment*. So that should any Man chance to thrive, and grow rich by *Injustice*, yet it is a thousand to one but either *living* or *dying*, or *both*, his *Riches* will prove a far worse Plague to him than *Poverty* itself; and if so, who but a mad Man would ever abandon himself to a Folly so *fruitless* and *mischievous*?

Fifthly and *Lastly*, Consider the high Provocation that *Injustice* gives to God. For God, as I have shewed you before, is the *Author* of all those Rights which Men are invested with; whether they be *natural*, or *acquired*: and being the *Author* of them, he is more especially obliged to *assert* and *vindicate* them,

them, to maintain his own Bequests and Donations, and not suffer those to go unpunished, who presume to purloin or alienate them from their *rightful Owners*. For he who wrongfully deprives a Man of any Right; deprives him of what *God* hath given him, snatches *God's* Goods out of those Hands in which he hath trusted and deposited them; and in so doing robs *God* himself, and seizes his Goods without his Leave. So that every unjust Invasion of another's Rights is an Injury to *God*, who is the supreme Proprietor, from whom all Right and Property descends. For since every *Man's* Right is derived from, and founded on the Right of *God*, whosoever trespasses on the *one*, must necessarily invade the *other*: all that is ours we hold by Tenant-Right from the great Landlord of the World, whose *supreme* and *independent Property* is the Ground and Foundation on which all our just *Claims* and *Properties* depend. He therefore who by Fraud or Violence dispossesses any Tenant of *God*, or seizes any Part of the Property which *he* hath farmed out to him; doth in so doing eject the *Landlord*, as well as the *Tenant*, and so far as in him lies, turn *God* out of his own World, and *usurp* his eternal Right and *Dominion*. And so long as he holds what *God* hath sent to another, he holds not as a *Tenant* of *God*, but as a *Robber* and an *Invader* of him, when he seized his unjust Possession, he snatched *God's* Goods out of his Hands, and while he detains them, he doth in Effect declare that he will keep *God's* Goods in Despite of him; that as he hath already thrust him out of this Part of his Creation, so he is resolved to keep him out as long as he is able, and never to permit him to re-enter

upon it, so long as he can maintain and defend it against him. Since therefore we claim by *God's* own Tenure, and all our Rights do finally issue and resolve into *his*; he is peculiarly concerned to *assert*, and *vindicate* them, because they are all *his own*. Hence is that Passage quoted by *St. Paul* from *God's* own Mouth, *Vengeance is mine and I will repay it*, Rom. xii. 19. for what is Vengeance, but only a *Retribution* of *Punishments* for Wrongs, and Injuries received? And therefore since all Rights are *God's*, and consequently all Wrongs do redound upon *him*, Vengeance, or Retribution of Wrongs must necessarily be *his Right* and *Prerogative*; and it being *his*, he will be sure to repay it, one Time or other: and though he may defer it a while out of *wise* and *gracious* Ends, yet in the long run it will appear that his *Forbearance* is no *Payment*, and the longer he is repaying the *Principal*, the greater Sum the *Interest* of his Vengeance will at last amount to. For what higher *Outrage* can you do to *God*, who is an Immortal Being, infinitely removed from all Passion and Suffering, than to break in upon him as you do by every Act of *Injustice*, and despoil him of his Goods, and rifle his House before his Face, and turn him out of Doors as it were, and shut up his own Creation against him; and in Effect to tell him, that from henceforth you are resolved to be your *own God*, to live at *his* Allowance no longer, but to carve and divide for *yourselves*; and that so far as *you* are concerned, *he* shall have no more to do in *his own* World, but that you will supply his Place in his Family, and order his Affairs, and dispose of his Goods, as you think convenient. Which is such an *intolerable Indignity*, as cannot but kindle a Resentment in
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the most *indulgent Nature*, and arm even an *infinite Patience* with Thunderbolts: and accordingly, if you consult either Sacred or Prophane History, you will find that there is no one Sin which God hath so *remarkably* punished in this World, as this of *Injustice* between Man and Man. For this he hath been observed, to plague not only the *unjust Persons* themselves, with such Judgments as have echoed and resounded their Crimes, but hath many times entailed a Curse upon their *Posterity*; which like a flying Scourge hath pursued them Generation after Generation, and marked their Descendants with dire Events, like a Coat of Arms charged with Crosses and Croslets: For this he hath pursued whole *Nations* to utter Ruin, and Desolation; and 'twas for this that he cut off his own People the *Jews*, and converted his beloved *Sharon* into an eternal *Desart*. And if his Vengeance thus smokes against Injustice in *this* Life, which is the School of *Discipline*; how will it burn against it in the *other*, which is the Stage of *Execution*? If the *Posterity* of the Unjust be thus rack'd for it upon *Earth*, how will the Unjust *themselves* roar for it in *Hell*! In a word, if these *temporary* Flashes and Eruptions of God's Vengeance against Unrighteousness be so dreadful, how terribly must it flame against it within the Bottomless *Vulcano's* of *everlasting* Burnings! Wherefore as you would not provoke an infinite Vengeance, which you can neither withstand, nor endure; it concerns you diligently to avoid all Unrighteousness in your Dealings, and Intercourse with Men; which if you take care to do, and to add to your *Justice*, *Mercy*; to your *Mercy*, *Sobriety*, and to your *Sobriety* walking *bumbly* with God, you shall

shall be sure not only to escape his Vengeance both here and hereafter, but also from these *Seeds of Holiness* to reap *everlasting Life*.

C H A P. I.

Of *MERCY*, as it *relieves the Miseries of the Soul*.

AFter the Consideration of *Justice*, that of *Mercy* is to follow: And the proper Object of *Mercy* being *Misery*, it will be requisite, in Order to the explaining of this Virtue, to consider what those human *Miseries* are which it relates to, and what are the particular *Acts* of *Mercy* which belong to them. Now the *Miseries* which Men are liable to in this Life are reducible to these Heads: *First*, Either they are such as do affect their *Souls*; or, *Secondly*, such as do affect their *Bodies*.

I. The *Miseries* which do affect the *Souls* of Men; which may be all comprehended under these five Heads: 1. *Sorrow* and *Dejection* of Mind. 2. *Errors* and *Mistakes* in Matters of lesser Importance. 3. *Blindness* and *Ignorance* in things of the greatest Moment. 4. *Malice* and *Obstinacy* of Will in destructive and mischievous Courses. 5. *Impotency* or *Want of Power* to free and recover themselves of them.

1. One of the *Miseries* which affect Mens *Souls* is *Sorrow* and *Dejection* of Mind, which like a Consumption in the Body, preys upon the Soul,
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dispirits its Faculties, and renders them *faint* and *languid* in all their Operations. By *Sorrow of the Heart*, saith *Solomon*, *the Spirit is broken*, Prov. xv. 13. And indeed *Sorrow* is that *Sense* of the Soul by which it *feels* and *perceives* its own *Miseries*, and without which it could no more be affected with calamitous Things, than Iron is with the Blows of the Hammer. This is the *Sting* by which all sad Accidents do wound and inflame our Spirits, and with which the least Trifle in the World can make us miserable in the most prosperous State, and turn all our Enjoyments into Wormwood. *Sorrow* therefore and *Dejection* of Mind being the Point and Edge of all our *Miseries*, is upon that Account a most *proper* Object of Mercy; whose peculiar Province it is to ease and relieve the Miserable. Whensoever therefore we do converse with the Sorrowful and Dejected, the *Law of Mercy* requires us to do what we can to *support* and *relieve* them; and that first by sympathizing with them, by sharing their Grievs, condoling their Sorrows, and pitying their Calamities, or, as the Apostle expresses it, *Rom. xii. 15. By weeping with those that weep*; which upon the *first* breaking out of a great Sorrow is the properest *Remedy* we can administer. For when a Passion is in its *Rage* and *Fury*, it is no more to be pacified with *Reason* and *Discourse*, than the Northern Wind is with a Lecture of Consolation; and till it hath *tired* itself a while with the *Transports* of its own Rage, to endeavour to check it with *Arguments* would be as vain an Attempt, as to dam up the *Cataracts* of the *Nile* with a Hurdle; which instead of *suppressing* their Violence would but cause them to roar the louder, and to swell and break forth into *more impetuous*

Torrents. The best Course therefore that can be taken at present, is to *humour* and *gratify* the Passion, by condoling with it the Calamity which caused it. For* as the *fiercest* Creatures are most easily tamed by *gentle* Management, by soothing, and stroaking and being kindly treated; so the best Expedient to mitigate *violent* Sorrows is to *sooth* and *indulge* them till their Violence is abated; to conform ourselves to them, and mingle our Tears and Lamentations with them. And accordingly we find that to be *pitied* and *condoled* is a real Ease and Comfort to the *miserable*; and that so far as we *partake* with other Mens Grievs, we do translate them out of their Breasts into our *own*: So that by sympathizing with them we take Part of their Sorrows from them, which like Dimensions may be so divided by us, as to become at least *insensible*, if not *indivisible*. Wherefore since it is not the Tears of their *own* Eyes only, but of their *Friends* Eyes too, that do exhaust the Current of their Grievs; which falling into many Streams will run more peaceably, and by Degrees contract themselves into narrower Channels; it is an Act of *Mercy* that we owe to the sorrowful to *condole* and *sympathize* with them in their Afflictions. And not to do so, or instead of that to be either insensible of their Sorrows, or to take no other Notice of them, but to *mock* at, and deride them, is a certain Argument of a *cruel* and *barbarous* Temper. And as we ought to *sympathize* with them in their Sorrows, so, when they are capable of it, we are obliged by the Laws of *Mercy* to use our best Endeavour to *support* and *comfort* them under their Heaviness, as the Apostle exhorts, 2 Cor. i. 4. sometimes by lessening and extenuating their Affliction,

tion, sometimes by applying to them the Consolations of Religion, sometimes by representing to them the Evil of immoderate Sorrow, and sometimes by diverting them with innocent Pleasantry, and Chearfulness. For *Sorrow* diverts the Mind from all *comfortable* Thoughts, and like a black Perspective-glass represents all Objects mournfully and tragically: So that unless *others* will have Mercy on it, and thrust Comforts into its Mouth, it will have no Mercy on *itself*, but sit pining and languishing under incessant Grief and Discontentedness. Wherefore to *cheer* and *comfort* dejected and sorrowful Minds, is both a *great* and *necessary* Act of *Mercy*; as on the contrary for any Man causelessly to afflict and grieve another, to add Weight to his Sorrows, and Wormwood to his Gall, and take Pleasure in his Grievs and Vexations, is not only *inhuman* but *diabolical*: For to rejoice in the Afflictions, and recreate with the Sorrows of the Miserable, is the blackest Character that can be given to a *Devil*.

Secondly, Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Souls is the *Errors* and *Mistakes* they are liable to in Matters of less Importance. The Understandings of Men are naturally weak and short-sighted, apt to be imposed upon by *Shews* of Truth, and to swallow *Lies* for Realities, when they are gilded with a fair Probability: And tho' we make loud Boasts of *Certainty* and *Demonstration*, yet God knows many Time our *Certainties* are the Dictates of our wild *Imaginations*, and our *Demonstrations* prove nothing but our own *Confidence*. For *Prejudice*, *Error*, and *Inadvertency* are as incident to our Minds, as *Diseases* are to our Bodies; and there are certain *Springs*
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and *Principles* in all Mens Understandings, which do render them liable to be turned about by *strange* and *unaccountable* Impulses. And generally our *Affections* are apt to creep into and mingle with our *Arguings*, so that in most of our Disputes the *Argument* on both Sides is commonly *lost*, and the Controversy determines in a Conflict of *Affections*. And in a word, the Generality of Men are unalterably *determined* in their Opinions by their *Fear* or their *Hope*, or their *Prejudices*, or the Prepossession of their *Education*; which like so many Whirl-pools, having once sucked a Man in, do most commonly keep his Head under Water, and never permit him to emerge and recover himself: And if the Prejudices of our *Education* happen to be false, in all our *Reasonings* from them we do only spin out one Error from another, and so our Thoughts wander in a Labyrinth, wherein the farther we go, the more we lose ourselves. And as our *Understandings* are very *dimfighted*, so the *Paths* wherein we seek after Truth, are commonly very *obscure* and *intricate*: For whilst we rack our Brains with nice and curious Speculations, we generally but delude our Reason with the little Images and airy Phantasms of Things; while we weary our Eyes with laborious Reading, our Books oftner prove the *Tombs*, than the *Shrines* of Truth; and while we pursue it through the stormy Seas of Controversy, there we are tossed with endless Doubts and Difficulties, which like the rolling Waves croud one upon the Neck of another. And thus we grope to and fro in the Dark, and 'tis a very great Acquist if in our Search after *Knowledge* we do but discover our own *Ignorance*. 'Tis true as for those necessary Truths which are the

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Fundamentals of our everlasting Well-being, God hath taken Care to propose them to us in so *clear* a Light, that no Man can be ignorant of them who sincerely inquires after them: But commonly the *re-moter* any Truth is from a necessary Article, the *less plain* and *obvious* it is to our Understanding; and therefore if in these we do err and mistake, it is not to be wondered at, considering how weak our Understanding is, and what disadvantageous Prospect it hath. And tho' these our Mistakes are many Times caused by a corrupt *Bias* in our Wills, by a factious Prejudice, or an over-weening Self-conceit, by a carnal Interest, or a supine Neglect of the Means of a better Information, which according as they are more or less *wilful*, do render our Errors Sins of *Infirmity*, or damnable *Heresy*: Yet very often they are merely the Effects of a *weak sighted* Mind, that is either unavoidably seduced with fair *Shews*, or innocently tinged with false *Prejudices*: And in this Case they are not our *Crimes*, but our *Miseries*. For we can no more be obliged not to *err* in our Opinions, than not to be *sick* or *hungry*; all that we are bound to is to understand as well as we *can*, and if when we do so, we should happen to be deceived, we have a just Claim to *Mercy* and *Commiseration*. And the proper Acts of *Mercy* which this miserable Case requires are,

First, Forbearance and Toleration; with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-Suffering, forbearing one another in Love; as the Apostle expresses it, Ephes. iv. 2. that is, abstaining from all harsh Judgments and severe Censures, from all peevish Separations from our Communion and Charity, and mutually teaching each other with all the Candor and Forbearance, Lenity and Indulgence, that a pitiable

tiabie Case requires and deserves. For if I am in the right, and my Brother in the wrong, to be sure it is *my Happiness*, and perhaps it is only *his Misery*; and what an unmerciful Part is it for me to damn or censure or rigorously treat him, merely because it is *his Lot* to be miserable and *mine* to be *happy*? What if he hath had the ill Luck to have his Brains cast into a different Figure from mine, by reading different *Books*, or keeping different *Company*, or being prejudiced by a different *Education*; is it reasonable that I should hate or severely judge him, because he hath been *unfortunate*, and perhaps could no more prevent those little Errors wherein he differs from me, than he could the Moles on his Skin, or the different Colour of his Hair and Complexion? What is this but to load the Oppressed, and heap Misery upon Misery, which is the most unmanly Cruelty? In this Case therefore the Laws of *Mercy* require us as private *Christians*, to bear with one another's Mistakes, to make the most *candid Judgment* and *Construction* of them, and interpret them in the most *favourable* Sense; and not to separate from one another for Trifles, or fly out into Bitterness and Animosity upon every little Opinion which we judge false and erroneous.

Secondly, Another Act of *Mercy* which this Case requires, is to endeavour, by all *prudent* and *peaceable* Ways, to *rectify* one another's Mistakes. If I behold my Brother's Understanding labouring under the Misery of *Error*, *Mercy* will incline me, so far as I am able, to endeavour his *Relief* and *Recovery*; an Error in the *Understanding* being as great a Misfortune as a Wound or Disease in the *Body*: And what merciful Mind can behold that noblest Part of

a Man diseased and affected, without being strongly inclined to administer what it can towards its Health and Recovery? And as Mercy will *incline* us to it, so it will *direct* us to the properest Means of effecting it: For if it be *Mercy* and *Compassion* that moves me to rectify my Brother's Mistake, it will move me to endeavour it with the *Spirit of Meekness*, which as the Apostle assures us, *Gal. vi. 1.* is the most likely Expedient to *restore* him; that is, calmly and compassionately to represent to him his Error, so as that he may see it is not my Design to *expose* or *upbraid* him, to insult over his Folly, or to *triumph* in his Confutation; but merely to set his Understanding to *rights*, and to *rescue* it from the Mistakes in which it is unfortunately entangled. And this, if any Thing, will dispose him to *listen* to my Reasons, and *make Way* for my Arguments to enter into his Mind: Whereas by deriding his Error, or persecuting it with sharp and bitter *Invectives*, I shall engage his *Passion* to defend it, as well as his *Reason*; for witty Jest and severe Sarcasms may *provoke* an Adversary, but will never *convince* him. And as Mercy will direct me to treat my erring Brother with *Meekness* and *Compassion*, so it will also instruct me not to *teize* and *importune* him with perpetual Disputacity; for this will look rather like an Affectation of *wrangling* with him, than a Desire of *convincing* him: But to wait the fairest *Opportunities* of remonstrating his Error to him, when he is most at Leisure, and most *disposed* to attend to Reason and Argument; for Errors, like Paper Kites, are many Times raised and kept up in Mens Minds, by the incessant Bluster of *over fierce Opposition*.

Thirdly, Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Souls is *Blindness* and *Ignorance* in Things of the greatest Moment, which is doubtless one of the greatest Miseries that can happen to a *Soul* in this Life. For the Interests of *Souls* are *everlasting*, they being born to live happily or miserably for ever; and their Happiness depending upon the right Use of their *Liberty*, and this upon their *Knowledge* how to use and determine it; it will be impossible for them to attain to eternal Happiness, or escape eternal Misery, without *Knowledge* to steer and direct them: So that whilst they are *ignorant* of those *Truths*, by which their Liberty is to be governed, and their Choices and Actions to be determined to eternal Happiness, they are under a very *remote Incapacity* of being happy. And what a miserable Case is this, to have an *eternal Interest* at Stake, and not to *know* how to manage it? To be travelling on this narrow Line or Frontier, which divides those boundless Continents of everlasting Happiness and Misery, and not to see one Step of our Way before us, nor to perceive whither we are going till we are gone beyond Recovery? Should you behold a *blind Man* walking upon the Brink of a fatal Precipice, without any Guide to direct his Steps, and secure him from the neighbouring Danger, would not your Hearts ake and your Bowels yearn for him? Would you not call out to him, and warn him of his Danger, and make all the Haste you could to take him by the Hand and conduct him to a Place of Safety? And is it not a much more deplorable Sight to see a poor *ignorant Wretch* walking blindfold on the Brinks of *Hell*, and for Want of Sight to direct him Heaven-wards, ready to blunder at every

every Step into the Pit of Destruction? Can you behold such a miserable Object with a *regardless* Eye, and yet pretend to *Pity* or *Compassion*? Can you sit still and see him cast himself into the Mouth of such horrid and amazing Danger, without *warning* him of it, and endeavouring by the best *Instructions* you can give him, to lead him off, and direct him to eternal Happiness? Surely did we but duly understand the Worth and the Danger of *Souls*, such a woful Spectacle could not but affect our Bowels, and excite us to employ all our Power to convince him of the Danger he is running into, and instruct him how to avoid it. For this is the proper Act of *Mercy* which this miserable Case calls for, *viz.* to endeavour to dispel that *fatal Ignorance* which surrounds Mens Minds, and to enlighten them with all those Principles of *Religion* which are necessary to conduct them to eternal Happiness. For it is not so great a Piece of Mercy to give a *starving* Man Bread as it is to inform an *ignorant* Sinner and feed his famished Mind with the Bread of Life; because without the former it is only his *Body* will die, whereas without the latter his *Body* and *Soul* will die for ever. When therefore we know any Persons to be grossly *ignorant* of God and Religion, the Laws of *Mercy* require us to use all prudent Means to *instruct* and *inform* them: and if they are in our Power, as our *Children* and *Servants* are, to take Care to train them up in the Fear and *Nurture of the Lord*, to catechise and instruct them in the Principles of Faith, and season their Minds with the Principles of *pure Religion*; that so understanding their Duty, and the vast indispensable *Obligations* of it, they may not leap blind-fold into

eternal Perdition. For whilst we train them up in *Blindness* and *Ignorance*, we do in effect predestinate them to *eternal Ruin*, and like those barbarous Parents that offered up their Children to *Moloch*, devote them, as so many Sacrifices, to the Devil. Wherefore we stand obliged, not only in *Fidelity* to *God*, who hath committed their Souls to our Charge, and will one Day require an Account of them at our Hands; but also in *Mercy* to *them*, that they may not perish eternally for lack of Knowledge; to take all possible Care to *instruct* their Minds in the Duties and Obligations of *Religion*. And as *Mercy* obliges us to instruct our *Children* and *Servants* who are in our Power and Disposal, so it also obliges us to instruct *others* whom we know to be *ignorant* of God and their Duty; to take all fair Opportunities to insinuate the Knowledge of Divine Things to them, and to cultivate their rude and barbarous Minds with the Principles of *Virtue* and *Religion*; or at least where we cannot be admitted to do them this good Office *ourselves*, our endeavouring it may be looked upon as a Piece of *Sauciness* or *Pedantry*, to recommend their miserable Case to *others* who have more *Authority* with them, or from whose Hands it may be better taken. For sure if we have any *Mercy* or *Compassion* in us, we cannot sit still, and see a miserable Wretch wandering in the Dark upon the Confines of *eternal Ruin*, without endeavouring, by some Way or other, to *reduce* and *light* him back to Heaven. Hence 2 *Tim.* ii. 25, 26. it is made a necessary Act of *Mercy*, *Meekly to instruct those that oppose themselves*, that is, out of Ignorance of the Gospel, *if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth, that they*

they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil who are taken captive by him at his Will.

Fourthly, Another of the *Miseries* which affects Mens Souls, is *Malice* and *Obstinacy* of Will in mischievous and destructive Courses; which is doubtless one of the *greatest Infelicities* that can happen to Man on this Side Hell. For to be obstinate in mischievous Courses is but one Remove from the forlorn Condition of a *damned Soul*, which being fixed and determined to Evil by the invincible *Obstinacy* of its own Will, lyes under a *fatal Necessity* of being its own eternal Hell and Devil: So that every Degree of *Obstinacy* in Wickedness is a nearer Approach to *eternal Damnation*, and will at last inevitably centre in it, if it be not stopped in its Course and Progress, and cured by a timely Application. Now what a deplorable Sight is this, to see a *wretched Soul* obstinately pursuing his own Destruction, and even *forcing* his Way to Hell through all the Resistances of his *Religion*, and *Reason*, and *Conscience* together? Should you see a Madman break loose from his Chain, and run his Head against a Wall, or catch up a Knife or Dagger and thrust it into his own Breast, and repeat Stab after Stab, in despite of all your Counsels and Dissuaves, would you not pity and lament his Case, and heartily wish him deprived of all that Liberty which he employs only to his own Destruction? And is it not a much more lamentable Spectacle, to see a *wild and desperate Soul* break loose from those Ties of *Religion* and *Conscience* which bind it to its Duty and Happiness; and in a deaf and obstinate Rage seize on the Weapons of Perdition, and plunge them into its own Bowels, and by *repeated Acts* of Wicked-

ness imbrue its Hands in its own Blood; whilst the blessed *Spirit*, with its own natural Sense of God, are struggling with it in vain, and fruitlessly endeavouring to disarm its desperate Fury, that it may not wound itself to eternal Death? What *merciful* Heart can forbear wishing, O would to God this miserable Soul had no Will, that it had not the Liberty to chuse or act! Would to God it were a Stone, or a Tree that have no Power to dispose of, or determine their own Motions, rather than be thus left at Liberty as it is, only to murder and destroy itself: But since to wish thus would be in vain, who, that hath any Pity, can sit still and see a miserable Wretch thus outrage himself, without endeavouring to hold his Hands, and bind him down with *Reason* and good *Counsel*? and this is the proper Act of *Mercy* which the miserable Case in Hand requires, *viz.* When we see an *obstinate Sinner* resolutely pursuing his own Destruction, to endeavour, by prudent and seasonable *Reproofs*, by pious and compassionate *Counsels* and *Admonitions* to reclaim him from the Error of his Way. For thus our holy Religion directs us to *exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of us should be hardened, i. e.* irrecoverably hardened, *through the Deceitfulness of Sin*, Heb. iii. 13. And how acceptable a Work this is to God, St. *James* informs us, Chap. v. 19, 20. *Brethren, if any of you err from the Truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.* Whereas by permitting Men to run on in their Sins without any Check or Disturbance, under a Pretence of *Complaisance* and *Civility*, is as much

much as to say; *Sir, you are going headlong to Destruction, and go you are like for me; for my Part whether you are damned or saved, is much at one to me; if you are minded to make an Experiment of Damnation, much good may it do you; I know, should I attempt to hinder or disturb you, you will think me rude and troublesome, and therefore rather than I will run the Hazard, e'en let the Devil take you.* And would it not be a high Compliment, if you saw a Man plunging a Sword into his Bowels, to cry, *Sir, I would hold your Arm, but that I am afraid you will be angry with me:* 'Tis true, this merciful Work of *Reproof* and *Admonition* ought to be managed with a great deal of *Caution*: If the Person we reprove be out of our Power, we ought to observe the *molli a tempora fandi*, to forbear him till his *Passion* is down, or his intemperate Draught digested, till his Mind is *sedate* and *calm*, and best disposed to attend to and receive a pious *Admonition*: For he who reproves a Man when his Mind is disordered by *Passion* or *Intemperance*, doth but preach *Patience* to a Northern Wind, which the more he endeavours to resist, the louder it will storm and bluster. But then when he is fit to receive a *Reprehension*, we ought to give it with the greatest *Privacy*: If he offend in *publick Conversation*, where there are other Witnesses of it besides ourselves, unless the Matter be highly scandalous, it is sufficient for the present that we express our Dislike of it by the Severity of our *Looks*, and the Seriousness of our *Behaviour*; and afterwards between him and ourselves, to remonstrate to him the Folly and Danger of his Sin. For to reprove Men *publickly* looks more like *Malice* than *Mercy*; especially till we have first made Trial

of *private Reprehensions*, and found them ineffectual. But then with our *Reproofs* we ought to take Care that we do not intermingle *Lightness* or *Drollery* on the one hand, nor *Passion* nor sharp *Invectives* on the other; but that we perform this *merciful Office* with the greatest *Modesty*, *Seriousness*, and *Compassion*; first endeavouring to *anticipate* the Offender's Displeasure, with kind and gentle *Insinuations* of our unfeigned *Respects* and *Benevolence* towards him; then representing his *Crime* to him with such a *compassionate* Sense of the Evil and Danger of it, as may convince him that *that* which renders us so severe to his Sin, is nothing but mere *Mercy* and *Charity* to his Soul: For to reprove a Man *lightly* or *passionately*, looks more like a Design to *deride* or *reproach* him for his Sin, than to *reclaim* him from it. Lastly, we ought to take Care that the Matter we reprove him for, be *really culpable* that we do not reprehend him for any *innocent Freedom*, nor for every *trifling Indecency*; but only for *plain* and *unquestionable* *Trespases* upon *Religion*: Lest he should look upon our *Reproofs* as the Language of a *supercilious* and *morose* Spirit, that affects to domineer and find Fault, and as such should despise and reject them. To avoid which, it is highly advisable, that while we *reprove* what is *evil* in him, we should *commend* what is *good*; that so our bitter Pill being sweetened with a due *Commendation*, may be rendered more palatable, and so go down with less Difficulty. But if the Offender, whom we reprove, be under our *Power* and *Government*, to our *Reproofs* and *Admonitions* we are obliged, in *Mercy*, to add *Correction*, if *Necessity* requires: For when it is come
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to that pass, that our Child or Servant must *smart* or be *damm'd*, it is a cruel Softness and Indulgence, not to *chastise* him. Were your House on fire, you would think it a Mercy to be rescued from the Flames, though you were dragged out by the Hair of the Head: And when the Flames of *Hell* are kindling about your Child or your Servant, would it not be much more merciful to snatch him away, though with *Smart* and *Violence*, than to stand still and let him *perish* for fear of *hurting* him? It is true, *Correction* ought not to be used till *gentler Means* have been tried and found *ineffectual*: For Blows are Arguments for *Beasts* and for *beastly* Natures, fit only to be applied to stubborn and obstinate Tempers, that are insensible to *Reason* and *Persuasion*: But when they are applied, it ought to be done with the greatest *Tenderness* and *Compassion*, when our Minds are *calm*, and our Passion *allayed*; that so the Offender may be sensible we do it not to wreck our *Spleen*, or vent and ease our *Fury*, but merely to *reclaim* and *amend* him: The Sense of which will cause the Correction to operate more *kindly* in him, to affect his *Ingenuity* as well as his *Fear*, and to melt him with the *Mercy*, whilst it breaks him with the *Severity* of it. This therefore is the *Mercy* which we are obliged to exercise towards *obstinate* and *stubborn* Offenders.

Fifthly and *Lastly*. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Souls is *Impotency*, or Want of *Power* to recover themselves out of their vicious Courses; for a *vicious State* doth so miserably *weaken* and *disable* Mens Faculties, so *impair* the Health and Vigour of their Minds, that it is not in their *Power* to help and recover themselves out of it. For to their
Recovery

Recovery it is necessary, first that their Thoughts should be determined to a fixed and exact *Consideration* of the Evil and Danger of their Sins, and of the blessed Hopes which God hath set before them to tempt them to renounce and forsake them: And then that these *Considerations* would so prevail upon and influence their *Wills*, as to captivate them into a thorough Resolution of Amendment; both which Effects are out of the Reach of the Sinner's *Power*, considered singly, and without the Concurrence of the *Divine Grace*. For his Mind is so *depressed* and *bowed* down towards these earthly and sensible Objects, which have been hitherto the sole Companions of his Thoughts, that it is not *able* to raise up itself to the Consideration of divine Things: And though now and then, a good Meditation may break in upon him, and seize upon his Thoughts, yet it cannot hold them a quarter of an Hour together; they are so *roving* and *slippery*, so *backward* and *averse* to any Thing that is *serious* and *divine*: So that unless the *Divine Spirit* lays hold upon them, and by his *powerful* and *importunate Inspirations* confines and fixes them, the *Man* will never be able to reduce them to any *fast* and *steddy Consideration*. And when with the *Holy Spirit's* Assistance he hath effected this, he hath a *perverse* and *obstinate* Will to deal with; which no Considerations will be able to determine to a fixed Resolution of Amendment, but what are set home upon his Mind, and continually *actuated* and *enlivened* with the vigorous Influence of the *Spirit of God*. So that of himself every habitual Sinner is a most *weak* and *impotent* Creature, that with all the Powers of his *Mind* and *Will*, the utmost Efforts and Strugglings of his *own* *Faculties*,

Faculties, is not able, without a *supernatural* Aid, to rescue him from Sin and Misery. For how many sorrowful Instances do we every Day converse with of Men, who in their *sober Thoughts* will sadly lament their own Follies; and blush in the Morning when they remember how their Brains were set afloat by their last Night's Intemperance; who yet when the *next Temptation* beckons them to their Lust again, return as greedily to it as ever; and though when they have *repeated* their Sin, they *curse* it and *resolve* against it, yet when they are tempted, sin again, and then weep and call themselves *miserable*: But still alas! the same *Inchantment* confines them to the same *Circle*! Now in this, *Philosophy* is at a Stand, nor can there any other rational Account be given of it, but only the miserable *Frailty* and *Impotence* which Men contract by *vicious Courses*. What then is to be done for these miserable Persons in this their *forlorn* and *helpless* Condition? Why, besides all the above-named Instances of *Mercy*, which we are obliged even for Pity's Sake to apply to them; we are also bound in *Mercy*, earnestly to recommend their woful Condition to the *God* of all Grace and Compassion, to beseech *him* to commiserate their Impotence, and with the out-stretched Arm of *his Grace* to touch their dead Souls, and raise them up into Newness of Life. For though in all Cases of Misery, *Prayer* is a proper Act of *Mercy*, yet there is none that doth so much need and call for our Prayers as *this*: For in all *other* Cases, either it is in the Power of the *Miserable* to help themselves, or it is in the Power of the *Merciful* to rescue and relieve them, or their Miseries are such as will quickly *end* and *expire* into eternal Ease; but as for the Misery of the *obstinate Sinner*,

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it is such as *God* alone can remedy, and such as if it be not remedied the sooner, will quickly determine in *endless* and *remediless* Misery. Wherefore if we have any Bowels of *Mercy* or *Compassion* in us, how can we sit still and see an impotent Sinner bound as it were to the Stake of Perdition, and not able to escape, though he sees the Flames of Hell rising round about him; without lifting up our Eyes to *God*, in whom alone his *Help* and *Salvation* lyes, and earnestly imploring him to commiserate the perishing Wretch, and to snatch him from his approaching Ruin? Wherefore as the Law of *Mercy* obliges us in general to pray for *all* that are in *Misery*, so more especially for these *wretched Creatures*, who are already within the Suburbs of endless Misery; and unless *God* stretches forth his Arm and saves them, will be within a few Moments beyond the reach of *Prayer* and *Mercy*. And thus you see what those Instances of *Mercy* are which we are obliged to exercise towards the *Souls* of Men: And for the Enforcement of our Duty herein, I shall subjoin some *Considerations* to excite our Christian Compassion.

I. Consider the inestimable *Worth* of those *Souls*, upon which your *Mercy* is to be employed. I confess, were the *Souls* of Men of the same Alloy with their *Bodies*, whose highest Pleasures do consist in the Gratification of a few brutish *Senses*, and are nothing else but the agreeable Touches of certain little Skins and Arteries, which are as inconsiderable as a Lute-string, and which, after they have repeated these Pleasures some twenty or thirty Years, do commonly expire into *Insensibility* and *Rottenness*; were, I say, their *Souls* of the same Make and
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Frame, it were not so much to be admired that we are so indifferently affected towards them. But these *precious Beings* are of a much nobler Constitution, their Faculties are made to relish *Godlike* and *Angelical Delights*, to drink for ever of that Divine *Nectar of Contemplation*, and *Holiness*, and *Love*, and to feast upon those Joys with which God entertains *himself*, and all his *Choir of Angels*: And as they are born to much higher Pleasures and Enjoyments, than those wretched *Bodies* which inclose them, so they are also made for an infinitely *longer Life* and *Duration*: For they must live *for ever* in inconceivable Happiness or Misery; and when their *Bodies* are mouldered into insensible Dust, be partaking either of the Raptures of *Angels*, or of the Horrors and Agonies of *Devils*. And can I think myself obliged in Mercy to feed and cloath the *Body* of my Child or Servant, the *Body* which within a few Days in Despite of all my Care and Pains will resolve into a Clod of stupid *Earth*! and yet be altogether unconcerned what becomes of that *precious Soul*, which must be the Subject of an *everlasting* Happiness or Misery; is it possible I should be so careful and solicitous as I am, to heap up great *Fortunes* for my Children, that so they may swim in Plenty a few Moments, wear fine Cloaths, and fare deliciously every Day, and at last go down to the Worms with Pomp, and in the mean time neglect that *immortal Being* within them, which, when all the Wealth I provided for them is shrunk into six Foot of Earth and a Winding-sheet, must be a *glorified Spirit*, or a *damned Ghost*! Sure did we but seriously consider, with what vast Capacities of Happiness or Misery the *Souls* of Men are framed and constituted, and
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what proportionable Fates do attend them; we should be much more solicitous than we are, not only to secure our *own Souls*, but also to make a timely Provision for the *Souls* of our *Children* and *Relations*.

2. Consider how much you are interested and concerned in the Fate of the *Souls* of *others*, but especially of your *Children* and *Servants*. For in this State of *Danger* wherein we are placed, God hath committed us to one another's Care, with a strict Injunction that we should *exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of us be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin*, Heb. iii. 13. And if when it is in our Power to *prevent* it, we suffer our Brother to be irrecoverably hardened in his Sin, we are *accountable* for it at the Tribunal of God, who will one Day severely charge us for this our cruel *Unfaithfulness* to our Brother, in suffering him to *miscarry* for ever without admonishing him of his Danger, and endeavouring to *rescue* him from it by our *charitable Counsels* and *Persuasions*: So that if we suffer him to fall by *neglecting* to exhort and admonish him, in all Probability he will not fall *alone*, but pull *us* down along with him into *Eternal Perdition*. Wherefore it concerns us for our *own Sakes*, so far as we have Opportunity, to discharge all *Offices* of *Mercy* towards the *Souls* of *others*; lest, whilst *they* perish through our *Neglect*, we should be *involved* in their Ruin. But then as for our *Children* and *Servants*, their *Souls* are more immediately committed to our *Care* and *Conduct*, as being placed under our *Power* and *Disposal* by God's over-ruling Providence; which by bestowing them upon us, and placing them with us, doth in Effect thus bespeak us:

These

These precious Souls I intrust in your Hands, to be educated and trained up to Eternal Happiness: See you give me a good Account of them, for if they perish through your Neglect, whenever I make Inquisition for Blood, I will certainly require it at your Hands. How then shall we be able to lift up our Heads, when God shall demand of us, what are become of those *precious Jewels* which he committed to our Trust? If through our barbarous *Neglect* they should happen to be *lost* and *forfeited* to eternal Misery; if through a wretched *Regardlessness* of their eternal Interest, we have not instructed and admonished them; if through a cruel *Fondness* and *Indulgence* we have not reproved and corrected them; or if by our wicked *Connivance* or *Example* we have encouraged and soothed them up in any destructive Course of Action; and so they should finally miscarry. Lord, what a *dreadful Account* should we have to give, when we come to appear at thy Tribunal! Where the Blood of our *Children* and our *Servants* Souls shall joyn with our own *Personal Guilts*, to cry aloud for Vengeance against us. Wherefore if we have no Pity or Compassion for *them*, yet let us at least be so merciful to *ourselves*, as not to omit those *Offices* of *Mercy*, which we are obliged to render to them.

3. Consider what a mighty Influence your *Mercy* may have upon their *Welfare*. It is not to be imagined how many Souls might be saved from perishing, were we but so *kind* and *merciful* as to distribute the *Bread of Life* to one another, according as we have Ability and Opportunity: How many a *dark Mind* might be *enlightened* by our sound and pious *Instructions*? How many a
head-

head-strong Will might we *curb* and *restrain* by our prudent and seasonable *Reproofs* and *Admonitions*? And how can we tell, but these our merciful Endeavours may, through the Concurrence of divine *Grace*, prove blessed Means of their final *Recovery* and *Happiness*? And if so, what better *Office* can we do in the *World*; or what higher *Dignity* can we aspire to, than to be the Saviours and Redeemers of *Souls*? And if by our *Instructions* and *Admonitions*, we might do so much Good in our common *Conversation* among Men, how much more might we do in our own *Families*! For our Children and Servants being under our *Power* and *Government*, will upon that Account receive our Admonitions with greater *Awe* and *Reverence*; and consequently comply with them with greater *Ease* and *Readiness*. And then we having the Conduct of their *young* and *tender* Years, in which their Minds and Manners may be easily *shaped* in any Form, it is in our Power to stamp upon them what Impressions we please: So that would we but *now* take Care to instruct their *Minds*, and regulate their *Wills* with wise and good *Principles* and *Admonitions*, we might easily impregnate their Natures with strong Dispositions to *Virtue* and *Religion*; and so by Degrees cultivate those Dispositions into a State of *Grace* and *habitual Goodness*. And when this blessed Effect is so much in our *Power*, what a *cruel Neglect* is it not to contribute towards it so far as we are able? Should you see a *Mother* deny a Morfel of Bread to her famished *Child*, when she hath *enough* and to *spare*; or strip it stark *naked* in a deep Winter's Frost, and *expose* it to the Mountains to be starved with *Cold*; Would you not brand her

her for a *Monster* of her Sex, and exclaim against her with the greatest *Detestation* and *Abhorrence*? And yet, alas! that *unnatural Cruelty* which we should so much abhor in another, we ourselves are too often guilty of in a much higher Degree. For by neglecting to *instruct* and *educate* our Families in Religion, we deny them the most *necessary* thing in the World, even that which is the Food and Raiment of their *Souls*; without which they cannot *live*, but must necessarily *starve* and *famish* for ever: And therefore by how much more precious their *Souls* are than their *Bodies*, and by how much more deplorable *eternal* Death is than *temporal*, by so much more barbarous and inhuman are *those* Parents, who do not institute their Children in Religion, than those who suffer them to perish with *Hunger* or *Cold*. For are you such Infidels as to imagine, that they are born only for *this Life*, and that there is nothing beyond the Grave in which they are concerned? If not, what Account can you give of this your *unnatural* Neglect of them? If you think they must live for ever when they are gone out of this World, why then do not you take care that they may live in the other World as well as in this? O improvident that we are! Can we be so much concerned that they may be happy for a *Moment*, and yet so indifferent whether they are happy or miserable *for ever*? Are their *Souls* such Trifles, or their *everlasting* Fate such an indifferent Matter, as that when it is so much in your Power, you think it not worth your while to concern yourselves so much about them? Wherefore in the Name of God, consider with yourselves, what an infinite Deal of *Good* you are capable of

doing them by your pious *Instructions* and *Admonitions*; and what an unnatural *Barbarity* it would be to omit and neglect it.

C H A P. II.

Of Mercy, as it relieves the Miseries of the Body.

I Shall now proceed to the second Sort of *Miseries*, viz. such as do affect Mens *Bodies*; under which I shall shew you what Acts of *Mercy* this Kind of *Miseries* requires of us. Now these, as the former, may be reduced to five Heads:

First, Natural Blemishes and Defects.

Secondly, Sickneses and Diseases.

Thirdly, Outward Force and Violence injuriously offered to them by those in whose Power they are.

Fourthly, Civil or arbitrary Punishments inflicted on them for Injuries received.

Fifthly, Want of outward Necessaries.

I. One of the *Miseries* which affect Mens *Bodies* is their natural *Blemishes* and *Defects*; such as Lameness or Crookedness, the Want of our Senses, or the Disproportion of our Parts, or Features; all which are real Infelicities, forasmuch as they render our *Bodies* either less *useful* to ourselves, or less *graceful* and *amiable* to others. And indeed our *Body* being an Object of *Sense*, is usually much more remarked and taken notice of, than our *Soul*, which

is an *invisible* Being; and consequently the *Defects* and *Blemishes* of our *Bodies* lying more in View, are much more liable to be reflected on, both by ourselves and those we converse with, than the *Stains* and *Deformities* of our *Minds* and *Wills*; which being placed out of Sight are less exposed to Observation: Which is the Reason that our corporeal *Defects* are so *grievous* to us, because being so apparent as they are both to our own and others Senses, they do not only upbraid us to *ourselves*, who being led by *Sense*, are apt to value ourselves by *sensible* Graces and Perfections; but are also prone to create a mean and contemptible Opinion of us in the Minds of *others*; the very Suspicion of which, if we are not *raised* above such *mean Considerations*, will be exceeding apt to grieve and afflict us. In this Case therefore the Law of *Mercy* requires us not to *contemn* or *undervalue* Men, not to *upbraid* or *reproach* them upon the Account of any *bodily* Blemish or Defect; but to overlook these as inconsiderable Flaws of their *Case* and *Outside*, and render them all those Honours and Respects which the Graces and Virtues of their *Minds* deserve: Considering that the *Body* is not the Man, but the immortal *Mind* that inhabits it; and that many times the richest Diamonds wear the roughest Coats and Outsides; that those natural Blemishes are *Infelicities* which Men could not *prevent*, and which they cannot *rectify*; that it was not in *their* Power to order *Nature* in their own Composition, but that what they had there, was such as they could neither *give* themselves, nor yet *refuse*, when it was bequeathed to them; and that therefore to deride and expose them for any Mis-shape or Blemish in their Composition, is to sling

Salt into their Wounds, to *fret* and *inflamm*e their Misery. And yet, alas! How common a Practice is this, to sport with the Deformities of Men, as if *God* and *Nature* had designed them for so many Finger-buts of *Scorn* and *Derision*; to make them the Themes of our Jests and Laughter; which is a lamentable Instance of the foul Degeneracy of Human Nature, that can thus *play* upon Misery, and turn that which is an Object of *Pity* and *Compassion*, into a Triumph of *Mirth* and *Drollery*: for certainly how light and trifling soever it may appear through the common Practice of it, it is a Sign of *barbarous Ill-nature* for Men to deride those Defects and Blemishes in another, which he is too prone to grieve at, but yet cannot help, as being his *In-felicities* and not his *Faults*.

II. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Mens Bodies is *Sicknesses* and *Diseases*; by which the Strength of our Natures is gradually exhausted, the Vigour of our Spirits wasted, the Activity of our Parts cramped and abated, and our *Bodies* are rendered, through incessant Pains and Weakness, not only *useless*, but *burthensome* to our *Souls*. In this Case therefore, the *Law of Mercy* requires of us to render to our sick Friends, Neighbours and Acquaintance all such good Offices as do any way conduce to their *Support*, *Refreshment*, or *Recovery*. As first, if their Sickness be such as will safely admit of *Discourse* and *Conversation*, we are obliged in Mercy to *visit* them, provided that our Company will be acceptable; and to endeavour by our Discourse, to *cheer* their drooping Spirits, to intermix their sorrowful Hours with the Pleasures of good *Conversation*, and to administer to their wearied Thoughts

Thoughts the *Supports* and *Comforts* of Religion. For cheerful and good *Discourse* is many times better than the richest *Cordial*; it makes the *Patient* to forget his Pain, or at least allays and mitigates his Sense of it; it diverts his Thoughts from their sorrowful Themes, and entertains them with brisk and sprightly *Ideas*; it raises the languishing Heart, and, like *David's* Musick, charms the Rage of those evil Spirits, which infest it with their unnatural Heats. So that by *visiting* our sick Friends, when they are willing to admit of our Conversation, and able to bear it, we many times prove their best *Physicians*, and administer to them the greatest *Relief* and *Ease*; and therefore if when we might do them so much good by our Company, we needlessly *withdraw* or *absent* ourselves from them, we are very much *wanting* in our *Charity* and *Mercy* towards them. But then, as we are obliged in *Mercy* to *visit* them, when their Case will safely and conveniently admit of it; so we are also obliged by the same *Mercy* to render them all those necessary *Assistances*, which either their *Souls* or *Bodies* do require and need; to endeavour to awaken their Minds into *serious* Thoughts and Purposes, to advise them of their *Duty*, and to resolve their *Doubts*, to comfort and support them with the blessed *Hopes* of Religion, and to take all fair Opportunities to prepare their Souls for a happy *Death*, and a glorious *Eternity*; that so whether they recover or no, this temporary Sickness of their *Bodies* may contribute to the eternal Health of their *Souls*. And then, in Order to their Recovery, we stand bound by the Laws of *Mercy* to contribute what we are able to their bodily *Ease* and *Refreshment*; to be ready to

serve them in all their Necessities, and to *help* them when they cannot help themselves; to *compassionate* their Grievs, and *bear* with their Peevishnesses, and to the best of our Knowledge, to *direct* them to the ablest Physicians, or the most suitable Means; and, if they are poor and indigent, to *supply* them with all such Remedies as are necessary to their Health and Recovery: And *Lastly*, to be their earnest *Advocates* at the Throne of Grace, that the God of all Power and Goodness, in whose Hands are the Issues of Life and Death, would commiserate their Sorrows, and refresh their Weariness, and either *remove* their Sickness, or *sanctify* it to their eternal Health.

III. Another of the *Miseries* which affect Men's Bodies, is outward *Force* and *Violence* from those in whose Power they are; such as *Captivity* and *Imprisonment*, *Persecutions* or cruel *Torments*; all which do importunately solicit the timely Succours of our *Mercy* and *Compassion*. For so for the *first* of them, *viz.* Bondage and Captivity, it is a sore and comprehensive Misery, that commonly draws a long and heavy Chain of Calamities after it: For 'tis not only a *Deprivation* of our Liberty, which is one of the dearest of all our temporal Blessings, but also a *Confiscation* of it into the Hands and Disposal of our Enemies: And when our Persons are exposed to the Will and Tyranny of our Enemies, what can be expected from them in this degenerate State of human Nature, but a cruel and barbarous Usage; to be worn out with Stripes, and Hunger, and intolerable Labour, and be forced to pine away our wretched Lives, in unpitied Anguish and Vexation of Soul; especially, if those whom we are enslaved to, happen
to

to be Enemies to our Religion, as well as Country ; which is the Case of those miserable *Captives* with whom our Mercy is most concerned ; who being under the Power of those that are sworn Enemies to the Name of *Christ*, must upon that Account expect to be treated with much more Rigour and Severity ; there being no Enmity so *fierce* and *cruel*, as that which is backed and set on by *Conscience*, and enraged with *Zeal* for *Religion*. And when Men are ill treated not only as they are *Slaves*, but as they are *Christians*, what a hazardous *Temptation* are they under to renounce their Christianity, and to exchange their Hopes of Heaven for their Liberty, and to enslave their *Souls* to ransom their *Bodies* ? And when both their Souls and Bodies are thus exposed to Wretchedness and Misery, what woful Circumstances can render them more proper Objects of our *Mercy* ? Wherefore in this Case we are obliged in *Mercy*, when any fair *Opportunity* is proposed to us, to *contribute* to their *Ransom* proportionably to our Ability ; and so far as it is consistent with the publick Benefit, to *solicit* their Cause both with *God* and *Men* ; to beseech *him* to support and preserve them, and to persuade all *those* with whom we have any Power or Interest, to a liberal Concurrence towards their *Relief* and *Redemption*.

And then as for *Imprisonment*, which is a Sort of Captivity too, what a calamitous Condition is it for a Man to be shut up in a close and unwholesome Durance, to dwell with Hunger and Cold, and be confined to a hard Lodging, a dark Solitude, or a wretched Company ; to be sequestered from the Conversation of his Friends, from the Comforts of Diversion, and from his Business and Employ-

ment, and all Opportunities of making Provision for his poor Family? All which *unhappy Circumstances* do commonly meet in the State and Condition of *Prisoners*, and render it exceedingly wretched and miserable. In which Case the Mercy which is required of us, is, first to *visit* them in this their uncomfortable Solitude and Confinement, supposing that they are our Friends and Acquaintance; and to endeavour, by our Conversation, to *divert* their Sorrows, to *raise* and *strengthen* their Hopes, and to *cheer* them with fresh Assurances of our Friendship; and then to use all just Endeavours to *mollify* their *Adversaries*, to *vindicate* their Innocence, or to *compound* their *Debts*, if they are not able to discharge them. But whether they are our Friends or Acquaintance, or no, the *Law of Mercy* obliges us, as we have Opportunity and Ability, to *relieve* their Necessities, to *redress* their Injuries, and if it be just and feasible, to *contribute* to their Enlargement, that so they may enjoy themselves with Comfort, and by their honest Industry make Provision for those who depend on them.

And then, *lastly*, for bodily *Torments* and *Persecutions*, you need not be told what a *Misery* that is; for your own *Sense* will inform you, how dolorous it is to Flesh and Blood, to be cruelly scourged, beaten and abused; to be pinched with Hunger, harassed with Labour, and dispirited for Want of necessary Ease and Refreshment; and therefore as *Mercy* binds you by the strictest Obligations, not to *inflict* these Evils upon your *Children* or *Servants*, or any others that are in your *Power* and *Disposal*; so it also engages you to endeavour the *Relief* of all such unhappy Persons, whom you know to be thus cruelly

cruelly treated ; to *intercede* in their Behalf with those their hard-hearted Parents, Masters, or Conquerors, by whom they are thus unmercifully dealt with, to remonstrate to them their Cruelty and Inhumanity, and to endeavour, by such Arguments as are most likely to affect them, to *reduce* them to a more *merciful Temper and Treatment* : And if in Despite of your Arguments they still persist in their Cruelty, to use all just and lawful Ways to *curb* and *restrain* them, to complain of them to those who have Power to correct them, and to *rescue* the miserable Wretches out of their Power and Disposal.

And then as for those who are unjustly *persecuted* for their *Conscience* and *Religion*, who to secure their *Souls*, and their Loyalty to *God* and their *Saviour*, are forced to fly from their Habitations and Countries, or to submit themselves to Spoil and Depredation, to Imprisonment and Famine, Torture and Death ; *these* doubtless are of all others the *greatest Objects* of our Mercy, because *they* suffer for our *common Master* and in our *common Cause*, which ought to be dearer to us than our own Lives ; because our *Religion* suffers with them, and what *they* suffer we must suffer (unless we will renounce our Religion) if ever we are reduced to their Circumstances. And can we, with *unconcerned* Hearts, behold our persecuted *Brethren*, flying into our Arms for Succour before the mighty *Nimrods* of the Earth, with their *Souls*, their *Consciences*, and their *Religion* in their Hands, and with pitiful Looks beseeching us to *deliver* them from the *dreadful Dilemma* they are put to, of delivering up their *Souls* or *Bodies* for a Prey ; without Agonies of *Pity* and

and *Compassion*? And if we have any *Mercy* or *Compassion* for them, by what more suitable Acts can we express it, than by a *kind* and *welcome Reception* of those who fly to us for Succour, and a *free* and *liberal Contribution* towards their Relief and Subsistence; and by assisting those with the Charity of our *Prayers*, whom we cannot reach with the Charity of our *Alms*; or, as the Apostle expresses it, by *remembering those that are in Bonds*, that is, so as to pity them and pray for them, and if it were in our Power, so as to visit, and comfort, and relieve them, *as being bound with them*, and also with the same Effect to remember those that *suffer Adversity*, *as being ourselves also in the Body*, Heb. xiii. 3.

Fourthly, Another of the Miseries which affect Mens Bodies is *Civil* or *Arbitrary* Punishments, inflicted on them for Injuries received. For all considerable Injuries do give us a Right to *punish* the Offender, either by due Course of *Law*, or else immediately by our own *Power* and *Authority*. If by Nature or Compact the Offender be put under our *Power* and *Disposal*, his Offence gives us a Right to *correct* him by our own Authority; if *not*, his Offence gives us Right to *appeal* to the publick Tribunals, and there to exact of him such Penalties as the *Law* denounces in the Case. Now because Mens *Souls* are out of the Reach of all human Punishments, and liable only to the Lash of the *Father of Spirits*; therefore we can exact no other Penalties of Offenders, but only such as do affect their *Bodies* with Shame, or Pain, with loss of bodily *Goods*, or wearisome *Labour*, or Confinement of *Liberty*; all which being Miseries to the *Body*, are proper Objects of our *Compassion* and *Mercy*. And
what

what *Mercy* these Miseries require, may be easily collected from the natural *End* of *Punishment*, which is not so much to *offend* the Guilty, as to *defend* the Innocent, not so much to *hurt* or *damnify* the Offender, as to *restrain* him from hurting himself, or others; and to *warn* others, by the Example of his *Punishment*, not to imitate the Example of his *Offence*. So that, according to its true and natural *Design*, Punishment is rather an Act of *Mercy*, than an Act of *Revenge*; the *End* of it being to do *Good*, and not to retaliate *Evil*; to defend *myself*, or *others*, against the Offenders, or else, to defend the *Offenders* against themselves, or to defend others against the prevailing Infection of their lewd and pernicious *Examples*: and whosoever punishes to vent and ease his *Spleen*, or gratify his *Malice* with the Hurt and Mischief of the Offender, transgresses the *End* of Punishment, and, under Pretence of *Justice*, sacrifices to his own *Cruelty*. No Man hath right to do another *Hurt*, unless it be necessary to some good *End*; for to hurt without any Reason is a brutish *Savageness*, and to hurt without a good Reason devilish *Rancour*: he therefore who hurts another, *merely* to hurt him, acts with the intention of a *Devil*, who doth Mischief for Mischief's sake, and plagues his wretched Vassals merely to recreate himself with their Miseries, and pacify his own black Rage and Malice. Since, therefore, the *End* of Punishment is doing *good*, it ought to be executed with a good *Will*, and a kind and benevolent *Intention*; not to discharge our *Rage*, or tickle and recreate our *Malice*, but either to *vindicate* our own Right, or to *reclaim* the Offender, or to *terrify* others from his Sin by his *Sufferings*. This therefore

fore is the *first* thing which the *Law of Mercy* requires of us, in respect to our punishing Offenders, that we should always do it with a good and benevolent *Intention*. But then,

Secondly, It also requires us not to exact Punishment for *small* and *trifling* Offences: For, since the *End* of Punishment is doing good, it is Cruelty to exact it for *slight* and *inconsiderable* Evils; because in this Case, the *Punishment* is a greater Hurt than the *Offence*. And, what Reason can I have to hurt another for such *small* Offences, as do little or no Hurt, either to myself or others, but only to gratify my own *Revenge* and *Malice*? as for Instance, suppose, that in a Heat of Passion, a Man should give me the *Lie*, or call me by an *ill Name*, or treat me with *reproachful Language*; and thereupon I should strike or wound him, or prosecute him with a vexatious Suit of Law; in this Case, it is plain, my *Punishment* would hurt him more than his *Offence* could hurt me, and consequently, my *Design* in punishing him, would be to do *Hurt*, and not *Good*; and to design to do Hurt, is *Malice* and *Cruelty*. Wherefore, in Case of *lighter* Injuries, the Law of Mercy requires us wholly to *remit* and *forgive* them, and not rigidly to exact the Hurt of the Offender for such trifling Offences, as do no *great Hurt* either to ourselves, or others.

Thirdly, The *Law of Mercy* also obliges us *not* to punish an Offender, when we can do *no Good* by it, either to *ourselves*, or to *him*, or to *others*; for, in this Case, to punish, can serve no other End, but to fulfil the Lust of our *Revenge*, and *Malice*. As for Instance, suppose I have a poor *insolvent Debtor*, that owes me a great Deal, and can pay me nothing;
and

and it were in my Power, not only to cast him into Prison, but to force him to languish away his wretched Life, to what *End* should I inflict this Punishment upon him? I cannot hope to *recover my own* by it, for a *Prison*, we say, *will pay no Debts*; and where nothing is, nothing can be expected: I cannot design to *reform him* by it, since Prisons are commonly the most fruitful Nurseries of Wickedness: I cannot aim to *warn others* by it, for what Warning can oblige Men to do that which is impossible? What *End* can I propose then, but only the humouring of a wrathful Mind, and to glut it with *Revenge* and *Mischief*? And, if this be the Point I drive at, I run from all the Rules of *Mercy*.

Fourthly, The *Law of Mercy* also obliges me *not* to punish an Offender, so long as the *End* of Punishing him is fairly attainable by *gentler Means*. For if, when I can obtain my End of an Offender by *Persuasion* and *Forbearance*, I rather chuse to extort it from him by *Punishment*; it is plain, that I have a *cruel Intention* towards him, and do affect to hurt and mischief him: For, when I may obtain my End of him, by *Forbearance*, or *gentler Persuasions*, why should I chuse to force it from him by *Rigour* and *Severity*; but, that I am either insensible of his Hurt, or else do take Pleasure to afflict and grieve him? Wherefore in all such Punishments as are within our Power, the *Law of Mercy* obliges us, first to try *softer* and *gentler* Ways, and make a long and thorough Experiment of the Methods of *Kindness*, *Persuasion*, and *Forbearance*; and if, by these we can obtain our End, and conquer the Offender, and vindicate our own Right, to *remit our*
Right

Right of punishing him, and *forbear* all Rigour and Severity. For Punishment is our *last* Remedy, and ought never to be applied to Offenders, till gentler Means have been tried, and defeated.

Fifthly, The *Law of Mercy* also obliges us to inflict *no more* Punishments on Offenders than what is absolutely *necessary*, to the obtaining those good *Ends* we design by it. For he who punishes an Offender more than is *needful* to the natural End of Punishment, can design no other End by it, but what is *cruel* and *barbarous*: and whatsoever is more than *needful* either to the *vindicating* our own Right, or the *reforming* the Offender, or the giving fair *warning* to others, serves to no other Purpose but to gratify our own *Revenge* and *Fury*. So far as Punishment is needful to these good *Ends*, it is not only *lawful*, but *good*: but all *beyond* which is needful to these, is perfect *Savageness* and *Cruelty*. When therefore, for the obtaining these *Ends*, we are necessitated to punish an Offender, the *Law of Mercy* obliges us first to try *lighter* and *gentler* Punishments; and if by these, we cannot obtain our End, to proceed in our Severities by *Degrees*, and not to fly to extreme Rigour, till we have found all *gentler* Corrections *ineffectual*. For, if a *lighter* Punishment will do the Work, it is Cruelty to lay on a *heavier*: And, whether it will or no, is no otherwise to be known, than by *Trial*.

Sixthly and *Lastly*, the *Law of Mercy* also requires us, always to punish *short* of the Offence, *i. e.* where the Punishment is in your *Power*, and you are not determined by a *legal Necessity* to use the utmost Extremity. For, where you are *legally* obliged either to judge, or prosecute an Offender, there

there you are to proceed by the Measures of the *Law* which obliges you, and which usually determines you to the *Kind* and *Degrees* of the Punishment to be inflicted: But, where the Matter is wholly in your *Power*, either to remit of, or augment the Punishment, there the *Law of Mercy* obliges you not to exact the *utmost*. For, if you punish *more* than the Offence deserves, you are *unjust* and *tyrannical*; because as your Right to punish, accrues from the Offence that is done to you, so your Right to punish to such a Degree, accrues from the Degree of the Offence; which you cannot *exceed*, without exceeding your *Right*, and exacting *more* Punishment of the Offender than he *owes* you. So that every Degree of Punishment, which *exceeds* the Demerit of the Fault, is *lawless* and *licentious* Violence, to which we can pretend no Right, and by which we do an injurious *Outrage* on the Offender. And, as when our Punishment *exceeds* the Offence we punish without *Justice*; so, when it equals the Offence, we punish without *Mercy*. For, the *utmost* Degree of just Severity, admits no Intermixture of *Mercy*; the Office of which is, to relieve the Miserable, and consequently to relieve them, when they have injured and offended us, of some Part of the Evils and Miseries they deserve. Wherefore, as he is an unmerciful *Creditor*, who rather than abate the least Part of his Due, will strip his poor Debtor to the Skin, and reduce him to the utmost Pinch, and Extremity of Need; so he is an unmerciful *Punisher*, that exacts to the full Demerit of the Fault, and stretches his Right of punishing to the utmost Extent, to make the Offender miserable. In this Case, therefore, the *Law of Mercy* requires

us to follow the great Example of *God*, who in the Midst of *Justice* doth always remember *Mercy*; who makes *large Abatements* of his Right to punish us, and never exacts of us the utmost Plagues and Sufferings which our Iniquities *deserve*. Conformably to which excellent Pattern, we are obliged in punishing others to intermingle *Mercy* with our *Severities*; and proportionably to the Offender's Penitence, or the pitiable Circumstances of his Fault, or the Misery and Necessities of his present Condition, to make an equitable *Abatement*, and *Defalcation* of his Punishment. And thus you see what that *Mercy* is which is required of us with Respect to our *punishing* of others.

V. *Fifthly* and *Lastly*, Another of the Miseries which affect Men's *Bodies*, is, Want of the outward *Necessaries* of this present Life, such as *Meat* and *Drink*, *Lodging* and *Apparel*; the Want of which cannot but render our Life exceeding wretched, and miserable. For what an insupportable Grievance is it to our Nature, to be pinched with an impatient Hunger, or suffocated with burning Drought; to be forced to prey upon itself for want of other Fuel, or to appease its furious Appetites with loathsome, heartless, or unwholesome Sustenance; to see a hungry Family crying about us for want of Bread, and have little or none to give them; to behold our Children shivering with Cold, and drooping with Famine, and not able to succour and relieve them; whilst our pined and miserable Carcases are either covered with loathsome Rags, or nakedly exposed to the Injuries of the Weather, and more destitute and unprovided than the Foxes and Birds, for Want of a Hole, or Nest, where to lay their Heads? These are Circumstances

Circumstances *miserable* enough to move a Heart of Stone to *Pity* and *Compassion*: In this Case therefore we are obliged, by the *Law of Mercy*, first, to a tender *Sympathy* and *Commiseration*; to affect our Souls with a soft and compassionate Sense of the Wants of our poor Brethren, to put *ourselves* in *their* Case, and represent *their* Condition to *our own* Hearts and Affections, as if it were *our own*; and thereby to endeavour to excite in ourselves a proportionable *Feeling* of their Calamity and Misery. And to this we are universally obliged, whether we are high or low, rich or poor, whether we are in Circumstances to relieve the Need of others, or to need the Relief for ourselves; for so the Precept runs universally, *Finally, be all of one Mind, having Compassion one of another; love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, 1 Pet. iii. 8.* And as we are universally obliged to *compassionate* those that are in Need, so we are also bound, according as we have Opportunity and Ability, to *succour* and *relieve* them. Indeed, if we are poor and needy we are by no Means obliged to pinch *ourselves* or our *Families*, to relieve the Necessities of *others*; for the Desire of *Self-preservation* being of all others the most vehement Passion, which God hath implanted in our Natures; he doth thereby not only *warrant* but *direct* us to take Care of *ourselves* in the first Place, and not to sacrifice the Means of our *own* Preservation to the Needs and Necessities of *others*. And then our nearest *Relatives* being next to *ourselves*, we are obliged in the next Place to relieve *them*; and consequently in all *Competitions* for our Relief and Mercy, to prefer the Wants and Necessities of *our own Families*. But

though *we* may not be *able*, without wronging our Families, to give Alms to our necessitous Brother; yet if by representing his Necessities to *others* who are better able to relieve him, if by *soliciting* his Cause and *begging* Relief for him, which he perhaps is ashamed to do for himself, we can any Way contribute to his *Succour* and *Support*, we stand strictly obliged to it by the *Laws* of *Mercy*: And this, if we can do no more, will be as acceptable to God as the most liberal Alms. For where the *Deed* is impossible, God always accepts the *Will* for it, and reckons *in* all those good Works to our Account, which he knows we would do if we were able. But when he hath furnished us with *Means*, as well as *Opportunities* to relieve the Necessitous, he expects the *Deed* as well as the *Will* from us; knowing that we cannot *sincerely will* the Deed, if when it is in our Power we do not *effect* it. Hence is that of *Heb. xiii. 16.* *To do Good and to communicate, forget not, for with such Sacrifice God is well pleased.* And accordingly the Apostle bid *Timothy*, *1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.* *To charge them that are rich, i. e. whose Enjoyments do exceed their Necessities, that they do Good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* And how necessary the Deed is to the *Sincerity* of the Will, when it is in our Power, that Passage of *St. John* doth fully evidence, *1 Ep. iii. 17.* *But whose bath this World's Good and seeth his Brother have Need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* This therefore is an Act of *Mercy* indispensably due from us to those who are in Necessity, to contribute according to our Ability towards their Relief and Support;

port ; and accordingly, *Alms*, which signifies a Gift to one that is in Need, comes from the *Greek* Word ἐλεημοσύνη, and that from ἔλεος, which signifies *Mercy* : which plainly denotes it to be one of the greatest and most principal Acts of *Mercy* that we owe to the *Miserable*.

C H A P. III.

Of Almfgiving, as to the Manner of performing it ; and some Motives thereunto.

WE have seen that *Almfgiving* is one of the principal Acts of *Mercy* : and it being so, I shall more largely insist upon it, and endeavour to shew,

I, The Manner in which it ought to be performed ; And

II. To *press* the Performance of it by some *Considerations*.

I. The Manner in which this Duty of *Almfgiving* ought to be performed, and that in these following Particulars :

First, It ought to be performed with a good and merciful Intention.

Secondly, Justly and Righteously.

Thirdly, Readily and Chearfully.

Fourthly, Liberally and Bountifully.

Fifthly, Timely and Seasonably.

Sixthly, Discreetly and Prudently.

First, This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed with a *good* and *merciful* Intention, not merely to court the Applauses and Commendations of Men, to bring our Names in Vogue, or to serve our secular Designs; but chiefly and principally to express our *Gratitude* and *Duty* to God, and *Confidence* in him; who hath not only filled our Cup, but crowned it with an overflowing Plenty, thereby enabling us to relieve others, and thereby constituting us *Trustees* for the Poor and Needy, with a strict and inviolable Charge to give them their Food in good Season; to which he hath annexed a *Bill of Credit* under his own *Broad Seal*, to repay us the *Principal* of our Alms with a thousand-fold *Interest*: With respect therefore to these mighty *Reasons*, and out of a tender *Commiseration* to our poor Brethren, we ought to perform our Alms; that so like Curls of *holy Incense* they may ascend to Heaven, and breathe a *sweet smelling* Savour into the Nostrils of God. For it is by *this* alone that they are consecrated into an *acceptable Sacrifice* to him, and rendered *true Piety* and *Devotion*: Whereas if we give our Alms merely, or mainly to be *seen of Men*, or to serve a worldly Interest, they proceed not from *Mercy* but *Self-love*. And since all Acts that are *materially* good do receive their *Form* and *Denomination* from the *Intention*; such *Pharisaical* Alms can be denominated neither *Pieties*, nor *Mercies*, but are a fordid Traffick for *Applause* and *Interest*; and hence our Saviour cautions us, *Take Heed that ye do not your Alms before Men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no Reward of your Father which is in Heaven: Therefore when thou dost thine Alms, do not sound a*
Trumpet

Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues and in the Streets, that they may have Glory of Men; verily I say unto you, they have their Reward, Mat. vi. 1, 2.

Secondly, This Duty of Almsgiving ought to be performed with *Justice* and *Righteousness*; that is, we ought not to give that in Alms which is none of *our own*, supposing it hath a rightful Owner, to whom we can make a Restitution of it. For what we have *wrongfully* got is none of *ours*, but *his* whom we have *wrongfully deprived* of it; and to him we are bound in Conscience to restore it, in Case he be living and we know where to find him; if not, to his lawful Heirs or Assigns: But if either the Party be dead whom we have wronged of it, or we cannot find him, or any Heir of his, that can lawfully claim it; it is not only *lawful*, but *necessary* for us to bestow it upon the *Poor* and *Needy*. For where there is no visible Owner, the Property reverts immediately into the Hands of the *supreme Lord* of the World; who hath settled it as a Pension on the *Poor*, to eke out the narrower Provisions which his Providence hath made for them. But to give Alms out of those *unlawful Gains*, which we are obliged in Justice to restore to the rightful Owners, is to make ourselves the *Thieves*, and the *Poor* the *Receivers*. For to do Alms is to give away something of *our own* to remedy another's Wants or Misery; and therefore to give away one Man's Right to supply another's Necessity, is not so much an *Alms* as a *Robbery*. By this Rule therefore Debtors that owe more than they can pay, are obliged in Conscience not to intrench upon their *Justice* by their *Mercy*; nor to disable themselves from being *just* to their Creditors, by being *merciful* to the *Poor*.

For though to relieve the Poor be *nakedly* and *abstractedly* good; yet it is to be considered, that particular Actions are good or bad, according as the *Circumstances* are which adhere to them: And when that Action which is *nakedly* good, happens to be cloathed with an *evil Circumstance*, it is so far evil and unlawful. And therefore when my relieving the Poor is accompanied with this *evil Circumstance* of *defrauding* my Creditors of their Due, I am so far bound in Conscience not to relieve them; because if I do, I must relieve them *unjustly*: This therefore we are especially to take Care of, that our Alms be *just* and *righteous*.

Thirdly, This Duty of Almsgiving ought to be performed *readily* and *cheerfully*. For this is the Apostle's own Direction. *Every Man according as he proposeth in his Heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of Necessity; for God loveth a cheerful Giver*, 2 Cor. ix. 7. And indeed if we give Alms out of a Principle of *Mercy* and *Compassion*, it is impossible but we must do it *cheerfully*; because by *Compassion* we make *others* Miseries our *own*, and so by relieving them we relieve ourselves, and are *Partakers* with them in the Comfort of those Reliefs we afford them. For when I see a Man struggling with Want, and groaning under a sharp Necessity, If I relieve him, I *ease* and *refresh* my own yearning Bowels; and the human Nature within me, which is common to us both, doth by a Kind of *sympathetick Motion*, exalt and raise up itself, and swells with a *generous* Pleasure. So that if Mercy be the Spring of my Alms, they will flow with a *free* and *cheerful* Current, because all the while I am watering *others*, I shall feel the
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Refreshment of my own Streams. When therefore we bestow our Alms with a *grudging* and *unwilling* Mind, it is plain that it is not Mercy, but *Shame*, or *Fear*, or *Importunity* that moves us; and if so there is no *Virtue* in them, nor can we expect that any *Reward* should attend them. For to contribute towards another's Relief, because we are *ashamed* or *afraid* to do otherwise, is rather paying a *Tax*, than giving an *Alms*: And when nothing can be wrung out of me, but what is distrained by *Importunity*, I give not for the *Poor's* Relief, but for *my own* Peace and Quiet: And what *Virtue* is it for a Man to give, only to get rid of a *Dun*, and ease himself of a troublesome *Importunity*? Wherefore to render our Alms *virtuous* and *rewardable*, it is necessary that they should be performed with a *free* and *cheerful* Heart; that they should flow like Water from a Spring, in *natural* and *unforced* Streams, and not be pumped from us with Shame, or Importunity.

Fourthly, This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed *liberally* and *bountifully*; according to the Proportion of our Estate and Abilities. For the *Design* of those *Alms* which are the Fruits of Mercy, is to *redress* the poor Man's Misery, to *satisfy* his hungry Bowels, and *rescue* him from the pinching Necessities under which he groans and languishes: And this being the *Design* of Mercy, it measures its Alms accordingly, and *proportions* them to the craving Necessities it supplies. And its Aim being not only to rescue the Miserable from *extreme* Misery, but also, according to its Power, to render them *happy*; it doth not think it sufficient to rescue the Necessitous from *extreme* Want and Famine, but

doth also covet to render their Lives *happy*, and give them a *comfortable* Enjoyment of themselves. For merely to keep a Man from *famishing*, looks rather like a Design to *prolong* his Torment, and *spin out* the Duration of his Misery, than to contribute to his *Ease* and *Happiness*; and if we design his *Happiness*, as we must do if we design *mercifully*, we shall endeavour not only to enable him to *live*, but to live *comfortably*, and accordingly *proportion* our Alms. It is true, the *Liberality* of our Alms is to be measured, not according to the *Quantity* of them, but according to the Proportion they bear to our *Power* and *Ability*; and though I should give five Times less than one who hath ten Times my Estate, yet I should be as liberal as *he*, according to the *Proportion* of my Ability: And accordingly the indigent Widow's *two Mites* are pronounced by our Saviour a more liberal Alms, than the much more which those which were rich cast into the Treasury, *Mar. xii. 42, 43, 44. Because they cast in of their Abundance, but she of her Want.* And therefore though (as I shall shew by and by) it is impossible to determine the *Measures* of Alms, which we are obliged to, because the particular Measure of our *Abilities* is so various; yet this to be sure the *Law* of *Mercy* exacts, that in Proportion to our Estates and Circumstances, they should be *liberal* and *bountiful*. For he who gives in such slender Proportions as bring little or no Relief to the Receiver, acts as if he designed rather to *mock* him, than to *supply* his Necessities; or as if he intended rather to keep him alive for a Prey to a *long* and *lingering* Misery, than to render his Life *happy* and *comfortable*.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, This Duty of *Almsgiving* ought to be performed *timely* and *seasonably*, i. e. in the nick of *Opportunity*, when the poor Man's Necessities call loudest for it, and our Relief and Succour may be most *beneficial* to him. To such Poor, indeed, as do always want, our Alms can never be *unseasonable*, because their Necessities do always call for them: But there are some particular *Seasons* when their Wants call *louder*, as in Times of Sicknes, or Scarceness of Work, or Dearness of Provisions, or in the Beginning of Arrests, before the Prison hath devour'd them; or after a great Loss, when their Fortunes are sinking, and a small Support may keep their Heads above Water; or, in a word, when they are young and capable of Work, or Instruction, and their Parents are not able to dispose of them, when the placing them out to some honest Calling, may prevent their turning Thieves, or Beggars, and render them useful to the World; or, when they are setting up their Trades with an insufficient Stock, and a little Help may encourage their Diligence, and advance them to a comfortable Livelihood. *These*, and *such* like, are the *proper Seasons* of Almsgiving; in which by tendering our helping Hand, we may rescue many a poor Wretch out of a deep Abyss of *Misery*, and render their future Condition *happy* and *prosperous*. Wherefore, the *Law of Mercy* obliges us, not only to bestow our Alms, but to bestow them at such *Times* and *Seasons*, wherein they are most needed, and may do the *greatest Good*; that we should not reserve them to our last Will and Testament, like Medlars that are never good till they are rotten; but embrace all Opportunities, while we are living, to give *timely Reliefs* to the Necessitous. For he, who *defers*

his

his Alms, when such *proper Seasons* are presented, is *so far* the Cause of all the consequent Calamities which the Poor do suffer by the Want of them: And since the *Design* of Mens Alms, is, to *relieve* the Sufferings of the Poor, 'tis doubtless a Degree of Cruelty to *prolong* their Sufferings, by needlessly *delaying* to relieve them. You would think her a cruel Mother, that having Bread enough and to spare, should rather chuse to afflict her Child with a long, unsatisfied Hunger, than to content its craving Appetite by giving it its Food in due *Season*: And, sure 'tis a great Defect of *Compassion*, unnecessarily to *prolong* the Sufferings of our indigent Brother, though it be but for a Day, or an Hour, when we have a present *Opportunity* to relieve him: And, since whatsoever Relief we do design him, he must necessarily *lose* so much of it, as the Time of our *Delay* amounts to, Mercy obliges us to relieve him *quickly*, and not to suffer him to *pine* away, whilst our Charity is growing.

Sixthly and *Lastly*, This Duty of *Almsgiving*, ought to be performed *discreetly* and *prudently*: For thus the Psalmist tells us, *Psal. cxii. 5. A good Man sheweth Favour and lendeth, and will guide his Affairs with Discretion.* And, indeed, unless *Prudence* be the Dispenser of our Alms, *Mercy* will miss of what it aims at, and designs by them, which is to do good to the Poor, to supply their craving Necessities, and give them a comfortable Enjoyment of themselves: Instead of which, if we do not manage our Charities with *Prudence*, we shall many Times *create* Necessities by *supplying* them, and *increase* and *multiply* the Miseries of the World by an *unskilful* Endeavour to *redress* them. For it is with Alms as it is with Estates, where

where half of the Riches doth consist in the *Discretion* of the Owner; and those very Charities, which being distributed by a *blind* Superstition, or a *foolish* Pity, do many Times do more *Hurt* than *Good*, might have been improved into a plentiful Provision for the Necessities of the World, had they been *wisely* ordered and disposed. But what Harvest can the World reap from this precious Seed of our Alms, when they are sown with a *careless*, or *unskilful* Hand? When they are either thrown on a Heap to *useless* and *superstitious* Purposes, or scattered at all Adventures, without any Distinction of the cultivated from the fallow Ground; so that the Birds of Prey, the *useless Vagrants*, *Drones* and *Beggars*, devour and eat them up, whilst the *modest*, *impotent*, and *laborious* Poor are utterly destitute and unprovided? Since, therefore, the Design of Mercy is to do *Good* with its Alms, to comfort and relieve the Poor, and supply their pinching Necessities; it is, doubtless very necessary, in Order to this End, that it should be conducted by *Prudence* and *Discretion*; which ought more particularly to guide and direct our Alms; *First*, In the Method of *Provision* of them. *Secondly*, In the Choice of the *Objects* of them. *Thirdly*, In the *Nature* and *Quality* of them. *Fourthly*, As to the *Proportions* of them. *Fifthly*, In the *Manner* of bestowing them.

I. We ought to exercise our *Prudence* as to the Method of *providing* our Alms. For herein *Prudence* will direct us, not only to be *frugal* in our Expenses, to pare off our Superfluities, and to be *diligent* and *industrious* in our Callings, that we may have to give to them that need; but also out of our
Incomes

Incomes and Profits, to *consecrate* a considerable Proportion to *pious* and *charitable* Uses. And herein the Apostle gives us an excellent Rule, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *Upon the first Day of the Week, let every one of you lay by him in Store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no Gatherings when I come:* Which, though it doth not carry with it a *necessary* and *indispensible* Obligation, it being impossible for many Men to take a weekly Account how God hath prospered them, and not to lay by accordingly; yet thus far, at least, it is a very *wise Direction* to us, that, as oft as we cast up our Accounts, whether it be *weekly, monthly, or annually*, we should, in *Proportion* to our Increase, devote some convenient Share of it, as a private Bank or Treasury, for *charitable* Uses; that so we may not be to seek for Alms upon *sudden* and *emergent* Occasions, but may have a Store *ready* by us, to supply our daily Expence and Distribution. And, if we take Care not to alienate, or imbezzle what we have thus devoted to our private *Corban*, we shall always give with Chearfulness, having by us a *Stock* designed to no other End but that of *Charity*.

II. We ought also to exercise our *Prudence* in the Choice of the *Objects* of our Charity, so as to take Care that they be such as do *truly* need and deserve it. For, unless we do so, we shall many Times encourage *Vice*, instead of relieving *Poverty*; and be tempted, by the *clamorous Importunities* of idle and vicious Persons, to *prostitute* our Alms to their Sloth and Intemperance. For, how often do we see the *imprudent Charities* of well-disposed Minds poured into those Sinks of Filthiness; and, like the Sacrifices of *Bel*, devoted to the importunate Lusts
of

of a Company of idle *Drones* and *Beggars*; that are not so properly the Members, as the Wens of the Body Politick, as being utterly *useless* to all its Natural Ends, and only serving to deform and bring Diseases upon it, and to draw away the Nourishment of it, from its useful Parts and Members? Now, what a Shame and Pity is it, that these precious Fruits of *Mercy* should be thus abused and misemployed, to pamper a Company of devouring *Vermin*, whose Business it is to croak about the Streets, and wander from Door to Door; whilst many a *poor Industrious* Family, that hath more Mouths to feed than Hands to Work, lies drooping under its Wants, and Necessities? Wherefore, though the former are not to be altogether *neglected*, when their Needs are real and urgent; yet, certainly *Prudence* will direct our Charity to such Persons, as have either *fallen* from Riches to Poverty, and consequently are less able to toil and drudge for Bread; or else to such as are either *worn out* by Labour, or *disabled* from it by Sicknes, or *oppressed* with such a numerous Charge of Children, as do exceed their utmost Industry to maintain. In such *good Grounds* as these, *Prudence* will advise us to sow the Main of our Charities, and not to throw it away with a careless Hand upon the *barren Rocks* and *Highways*, to be devoured by Vermin, and Birds of Prey.

III. We ought to exercise our *Prudence*, in determining the *Nature* and *Quality* of our Alms. And, herein *Prudence* will direct us, to prefer those Alms which may serve a poor Man for a *constant* Provision, and put him in a *fixed* Way of Living, before those which are *transient*, and do only help in a

Pang

Pang of Need; which do juſt hold him up from perishing for an Hour, but do not take him out of the *deep Waters*. Wherefore, if the Person, to whom we design a Relief, be fit and able to *work*, or hath been bred up in any honest *Occupation*, 'tis a much *wiser* Charity, to provide him an *Employment*, or to contribute towards the Setting him up in his *Trade*, than barely to relieve his *present* Necessity; because, by this Means we relieve him both for the *present* and *the future*, and convert our Alms into a *standing* Maintenance. Upon which Account, 'tis doubtless, a very *prudent* Charity to contribute to the Erection and Maintenance of Publick *Work-houses* for the Poor, where they and their Children, may be provided with such Work as they are capable of; and thereby, be inured to *Industry*, and enabled to support *themselves*. And, as *prudent* Charity prefers such Alms, as do draw after them a *lasting* Effect and Benefit, before such as do only supply a *transient* Necessity; so it also chuses, if it be consistent with Convenience, to give its Alms, in *Kind*, rather than in *Value*; to give Cloaths to the Naked, and Food to the Hungry, Physick to the Sick, and Books to the Uninstructed: For, though Money, indeed, will answer all these Needs, yet, we are not sure it will be always laid out upon them.

IV. We ought to exercise our *Prudence* also, in stating the *Proportions* of our Charity; that is, what Proportion of our Income, or Increase, we ought to *devote* to charitable Uses, and in what Proportion we ought to *distribute*. For, as for the first of these, when all is done, every Man must be his own *Casuiſt*. The *Jews*, indeed, had a Proportion fixed, and stated

to their Hands ; for, there was a double Tithing prescribed to them by the Law of *Moses*, viz. the every Years Tithing, which was an annual tenth Part of their Increase, for the Maintenance of their *Priests*, and *Sacred Officers*; and then, there was a third Years Tithing, which amounted to the thirtieth Part of their Increase, and that was devoted for the Supply and Maintenance of the *Poor*: And, if such a Proportion were required of the *Jews*, we may be sure a greater is required of *us*, whose Righteousness must *exceed* the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, if ever we mean to enter into the Kingdom of God. But, since *God* hath not determined the exact Proportions of our Charity, it is impossible for *us* to do it, where there are such *different* Circumstances and Abilities in this Matter: Therefore, we must leave Men, who best understand their own Condition, to the Guidance of their own *Conscience* and *Discretion*; who are in the first Place to consider, what is requisite to support them in the Condition of their Birth, their Place, or Office, or Family, and to the Discharge of their several Obligations. For, *Prudence* doth not require of all the same Proportions of Charity; some may afford a *twentieth*, others a *thirtieth*, and to others, whose Children and Dependents are numerous, or whose Fortunes are clogged and entangled, the *hundredth* Part may be over-measure. Wherefore, according as the Heap is, the *wise* Man is to sow and distribute; subtracting not only what will support his *Life*; but also, what will maintain the *Decency* of his Estate and Person; and, that not only as to *present* Needs, but also, as to *future* Necessities, and very probable Contingencies.

cies. But yet, in the stating of this Matter, it is, doubtless, much safer to *exceed*, than to fall *short* of our due Proportions ; for as for *Exceeding*, we have many holy Persons for our *Precedents*, we have *Christ* himself for our Voucher in the fore-named Case of the *poor Widow*, and a vast Treasure in *Heaven* for our Reward. Wherefore, in the Determination of this Case, *Christian Prudence* will direct us not to be too nice and curious, too fond and partial to *ourselves*, in stretching our Needs and Conveniencies beyond their *just* Dimensions ; but to take easy and moderate Measures of them, and to spare, what may be *decently spared* from superfluous Servants, idle Meetings, unnecessary Feasts, and chargeable Garments and Diversions ; and, if we thus pare off our *needless* Expence, and lay aside the *Surplusage* for Charity, the Consequence will be this ; the *Poor* will be more plentifully *relieved*, and *ourselves* will be more *able* to do it, and we shall reap more Pleasure and Profit from laying out upon the Backs and Bellies of the *Poor*, than from wasting it on our own Vanity. And, now having fixed the Proportion of your Estates for Charity, you ought, in the next Place, to advise with your *Prudence*, in what Proportions to *distribute* it : And here, *Prudence* will direct you to differ in your *Distributions*, according to the different *Circumstances* of those whom you design to relieve by them. To such as are of a *lower* Rank, *Prudence* directs to give by *little and little*, according to their emergent *Necessities* ; yet so, as not always to limit your Alms to their bare *Necessities*, but sometimes to extend them even to their *Refreshment* and *Recreation* : That so, together with their *Toil* and
Drudgery,

Drudgery, they may now and then enjoy some Sabbath for the *Ease* of human Nature: but to such whose Fortunes are by *Loss* and *Accident* sunk and declined, both Decency and Mercy requires us to *enlarge* the Proportion of our Alms; considering how great a Fall it is from *Plenty* to *Necessity*, and consequently how much more is necessary to raise up such *dejected* Creatures, who are so unexperienced to Misery, into any Degree of *Comfort*, or *Self-Enjoyment*.

Fifthly and *Lastly*, We ought to exercise our *Prudence* also in the *Manner* of bestowing and conveying our Alms; so that we may oblige both by *what* we give, and by the *Way* of our giving it. And accordingly *Prudence* will sometimes direct us to *search* and *find* out just Needs, and *prevent* the Poor from asking, by *surprising* them with a Kindness which they did not look for: By which Means we shall strengthen their *Faith* in the Providence of God, who thus creates them Friends out of the Dust, and brings them Supplies without, and beyond their Expectations. And then in giving, *Prudence* will direct us not to *upbraid* the Want, or *insult* over the Miseries of those we give to; for that would be to feed them with a Bit and a Knock, and to *sophisticate* our *Mercy* with *Cruelty*. And when any miserable Creature would borrow or beg of us, *Prudence* will advise us not to turn him away with *Scorn*; nor yet to remove him at a Distance with Signs of *Disdain*, or *Contemptuous* Violence; but if we see Reason to grant him his Request, to do it with *ready* and *open* Hand, that so the *Freedom* of our Charity may *raise* and *enhance* the Comfort of it; and that that

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which

which we design for a *Relief* and *Succour*, may leave no *Sting* behind it in the Mind of the Receiver. And above all we ought to take especial Care, not to oppress the *Modesty* of the Humble, especially of those who have been wont to *give*, and not to *receive*; not to relieve them with *lofty* Looks, or *angry* Words, or a *scornful* and *severe* Behaviour; not to *expose* their Poverty by the divulging our Charity, or conveying it to them in the *open View* of the World; but to hand our Relief to them in such a *secret* and *benign*, *courteous* and *obliging* Manner, as that they may receive it with *Cheerfulness*, and without *Blushing* and *Confusion*; and then as for those whose *constant* Necessities have habituated them to ask, and receive with more *Confidence* and *Assurance*; our *Prudence* will direct us to convey our Alms to them with such a Mixture of *Severity* and *Sweetness*, as neither to encourage them to grow upon our Charity, nor drive them into Desperation of it.

I now proceed to press and enforce the *Practice* of this great Duty, with some *Motives* and *Arguments*, which are these that follow. *First*, *Almsgiving* is imposed upon us as a *necessary* Part of our *Religion*. *Secondly*, It is recommended to us by the *Examples* of God, and of our *Saviour*, *Thirdly*, It is a *substantial* Expression of our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God, and our *Saviour*. *Fourthly*, It charges an *high Obligation* to us upon the Accounts of God, and our *Saviour*.

I. Consider that giving *Alms* is imposed upon us as a *necessary* Part of our *Religion*; that is, when God hath furnished us with *Abilities* and *Opportunities* to do it. For where we cannot give
Money

Money to relieve the Poor, our *Pity* and our *Prayers* are accepted for Alms: *for if there be a willing Mind* (says the Apostle) *that is a charitable Heart, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. viii. 12. But where a Man hath, it is his indispensable Duty to do accordingly: *for pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World*, Jam. i. 27. And that this Visitation is to be performed with an open and a liberal Hand, the same Apostle informs us, Jam. ii. 15, 16. *If a Brother or a Sister be naked and destitute of daily Food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in Peace, be you warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the Body, what doth it profit?* That is, if instead of Food and Raiment, you only give him fair Words and good Wishes, what doth it profit him? Or what Advantage can you expect to reap by it? And to the same Purpose, 1 John iii. 17. *But whoso hath this World's goods, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* That is, let him pretend what he pleases, he hath not one Spark of Love to God or true Religion in his Bosom. So that for Men to pretend to Religion, who are able to relieve the Poor and yet refuse it, is one of the greatest Mockeries in the World: for howsoever Mens Covetousness may bribe their Conscience to dispense with the Obligations of Almsgiving, as if it were only a carnal Ordinance, or useless Relique of Popery, a holy Cheat, a devout Drunkard, a pious Fornicator are not greater Contradictions in the Sense of Scrip-

ture, than a *hard-hearted, stingy, and a hide-bound* Saint. For though our *Religion* doth by no Means warrant us in such a vain and fond Opinion of our good *Works*, as to think we *merit* Heaven by them; nor presume to drive a *Bargain* with God, by putting our good *Works* into the Balance with an *infinite and eternal* Reward, our Hopes of which we wholly owe to the *infinite Goodness* of God through *Jesus Christ*; yet it requires them of us as a *necessary Condition*, upon which God hath entailed all our future Bliss, and without which we can never hope for Admittance into the Kingdom of God. So that if we are *able* to relieve the Poor, and yet will *not* when we have *Opportunity*, by shutting up our Bowels against them, we shut the Door of Heaven against *ourselves*; and must one Day expect to receive the same Answer from God, that we give to them: *I have nothing for you, no Mercy, no Heaven for such unmerciful Wretches, as would rather suffer their poor Brethren to perish, than part with a Penny to relieve them.* For of this Doom our Saviour himself hath fairly forewarned us, *Matt. xxv. 41, 42, 43. Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire; for when I was hungry ye fed me not, when I was naked, ye clothed me not:* So that from any Encouragement our Religion gives us, we may as well hope to go to Heaven without *Faith* and *Repentance*, as without giving of Alms according to our Ability and Opportunity.

II. Consider that giving of *Alms* is highly recommended to us by the *Examples* of God and our Saviour. For as for *God*, the whole Series of his *Providence* is little else but a continued Dole of *Alms* and *Charities* to his Creatures: It was his
Charity

Charity that *founded* this vast and magnificent *Hospital* of the World, that *stocked* it with such a numberless Swarm of Creatures, and *endowed* it with such plentiful Provisions for the Support and Maintenance of them all: So that we do all of us live upon *his Alms*, and depend upon *his* boundless *Charity*, for every Breath of *Air* we draw, for every Bit of *Bread* we eat, and for every Rag of *Cloaths* we wear. And indeed what are all the *good Things* of this World but so many Effluxes and Arguments of his *Almighty Liberality*? Look every where about *Nature*, consider the whole Tenor of his *Hands*, and you shall find them all conspiring in that amiable Character the Psalmist gives of him, *Psal.* cxix. 68. *Thou art good, and thou doest good.* So that in relieving the Necessities of others, we act the Part, and the best Part too, of the *Almighty Father* of Beings; who sits at the upper End of the Table, and carves to his whole Creation. Hence St. *Gregory Nazian.* speaking of the charitable Man, saith, that he is τῷ ἀτυχῶντι Θεός, τ' ἑλιον τῷ Θεῷ μιμησάμεν, ἔδεν γὰρ ἕτως ὡς τὸ ὑποποιεῖν ἀνθρώπων ἔχει Θεῷ. i. e. *A God to the unfortunate, imitating the Mercies of God: For Man hath in nothing so much of God, as in doing Good;* which is doubtless the most *divine* and *Godlike* thing, that a Creature is capable of. What then can be more honourable, or more becoming a *Creature*, than to tread in the Footsteps of *God*, to transcribe *his* Nature and Actions, and be a kind of *Vice-God* in the World? Surely did we but understand and consider how *divinely magnificent* it is to *supply* the Necessities, and *contribute* to the Happiness of others; we should court

it as our *highest Preferment*, and bleſs God upon our bended Knees for deeming us worthy of ſuch an *illuſtrious Employment*; and that among the numerous Bleſſings he hath heaped upon us, he hath vouchſafed to admit us to *ſhare* with himſelf in the *Glory of doing Good*.

And as the Example of *God* doth highly recommend to us the relieving of the *poor* and *miferable*, ſo alſo doth the Example of our *Saviour*. For it was for *this* that he left his Father's Boſom, and came down from Heaven into our Nature, that he might *relieve* a poor perishing World, and reſcue it from eternal Ruin. And what a *glorious Recommendation* of *Charity* is this, that the Son of God choſe rather to *do good* upon Earth, than to reign over Angels in Heaven? And while he was here, the ſole Employment he thought *worthy* of himſelf, was to *relieve* the Miſerable, to *feed* the Hungry, to *cure* the Blind and the Lame, to *reſtore* the Sick, to *inſtruct* the Ignorant, and *reclaim* the Rebellious. This was the *Drift* of all his Actions, this the *Subject* of his Miracles, and this the *Scope* of all his Doctrines: So that his whole *Life* was nothing elſe but a continued Train of *Beneficencies*; for the Apoſtle tells us in the xth of the *Acts*, ver. 38. that *he went about doing good*. Conſider this, therefore, O thou *hard-hearted* Chriſtian, that ſtoppeſt thy Ears, againſt the poor Man's Cries! What would thy *bleſſed Lord* have done, had he been in *thy* Caſe and Circumſtances? Would *He*, who had ſo much *Compaſſion* on the Multitude, as to work a *Miracle* to feed them, have turned that miſerable Wretch away as thou doſt, without the leaſt Dram of *Comfort* and *Relief*? Would *He*, whoſe Heart and
Hand

Hand was always *open* to the Poor and Miserable, have despised the poor Man's Moans as *thou dost*, or *shut* his Bowels of Compassion against him? Do but peruse the Pattern of *his* Life, and scan over *his* whole Behaviour; and see, if there be any one Action, in all that great *Exemplar*, that doth not upbraid thee, and cry *Shame* upon thee, for intitling thy *narrow, cruel, and stingy* Self, a *Disciple*, to such a *merciful, generous, and liberal* Master; and if so, learn for the Future, either to be so *honest* as to follow his Rule and Example, or else, so *modest* as to disclaim thy Relation to him.

III. Consider, that giving of *Alms* is a most *substantial* Expression of our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God, and our Saviour. How much we are obliged to express our *Gratitude* to God, for these our outward *Enjoyments* and *Abilities* to do good to others, is evident from hence; because we *receive* them from him, and do *hold* in Virtue of his Donation. For, to suppose ourselves *independent Possessors* of them, is in Effect to *divest* God of his Dominion, and to *strip him* into an insignificant Cypher, that only sits above in the Heavens, like an Almighty *Sardanapalus*, with his Arms folded in his Bosom; and, no further concerning himself in the Affairs of this lower World, than to look down from his Throne, and please himself to see Men scrambling for their several Shares of it. But, if we suppose him, as we have infinite Reason to do, the *Almighty* Author, and *Supreme* Disposer of all things; then we must acknowledge, that 'tis from *his* overflowing *Bounty*, that we derive whatever we possess; that 'tis the Gold of *his* Mines that enriches us, the Crops of *his* Fields that feed us, the Fleeces

of his Beasts that cloath us, and, that every good Thing we enjoy, is handed to us by the Ministry of his all-disposing Providence. And, since we owe all to his Bounty, and, in our greatest Flourish are but his *Almsmen*, and *Pensioners*; how deeply are we obliged to return upon him in the Oblations of *Love* and *Thanksgiving*? And, since *Love* and *Gratitude*, consist either in the Affection of the *Mind*, or in the verbal *Signification* of it, or in the effectual *Performance* of good Things to the Person whom we *thank* and *love*; this last is the most compleat and *substantial* Expression of the *Reality* of our Words and Affections. For, though *Good Will* is, indeed, the Root of *Love* and *Gratitude*; yet, *that* lying under Ground and out of Sight, we cannot conclude its Being and Life, without *visible Fruits* of Beneficence to the Person whom we *thank* and *love*: And, as for *good Words*, they are, at best, but the *Leaves* of *Love* and *Gratitude*; but 'tis *good Works* that are the real *Fruits* of them, by which their *Sincerity* is demonstrated. For, as no Man doth ever impress a *false* Stamp upon the *finest* Metal, so *costly* Thanks and *Love* are seldom *counterfeit*. It is to decline spending their *Goods*, or their *Pains*, that Men do so often *forge* and *feign*, pretending to make up in *wishing* well the Defects of *doing* so, and paying down *Words*, instead of *Things*: But, where *Works* are wanting, there is no *Expression* of our *Love*, or *Gratitude*, can either be *real* in itself, or *acceptable* to God. So that we may spare our *Breath*, if we keep back our *Substance*; for our *close* Hand gives the Lye to our *full* Mouth, and all our *verbal Praises* of God, when we will part with nothing for his Sake, are only so many

many empty *Complements*, and downright *Mockeries*. But then, do your Love and Gratitude to God discover their *Reality*, when it appears by our *Actions*, that we think nothing too dear for him; when, for *his* Sake, who hath fed and cloathed us, and abundantly supplied *our* Necessities, we are ready, upon all Opportunities, to feed and cloath, and supply the Necessities of *others*. And, can we think any Thing *too dear*, by which we may express our Gratitude to *him*, upon whose overflowing Bounty we depend for *every Blessing* we have, or hope for; who hath provided not only this *temporal* World for our *Bodies*, but also, an *eternal* Heaven for our *Souls*; and hath sent his *Son* to us, from his own Bosom, to tread out our Way to it, and conduct us thither; or can we think any Thanks *too costly* for that *blessed Son*, who never grudged to come down from Heaven into this Vale of Miseries, and pour out his *Blood* for our Sakes? Was it not much harder for him to part with *Heaven*, than 'tis for you to part with a little *Money*? And, can you think it much to bestow an *Alms* for *his* Sake, who never grudged to lay down his *Life* for *yours*? This is the Argument of the Apostle, 2 Cor. viii. 9. *For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho' he was rich, yet, for your Sakes he became poor, that ye through his Poverty might be rich.*

Fourthly, Consider that giving of *Alms* charges an *high Obligation* to us, upon the Accounts of *God* and our *Saviour*. For, *God* lends the poor Man his *Name*, and allows him to crave our Succours for *his* Sake: He gives him *Credit* from *himself* to us for what he stands in Need of, and bids him charge what he receives upon *his own* Account, permitting

permitting to reckon himself *obliged* thereby, and to write him down our *Debtor*: So that when we stop our Ears to the Cries of the *Poor*, he reckons *himself* repulsed by us, and interprets it as a rude Affront offered to his *own Person*, it being offered to one that bears his *Name*, and wears his *Livery*. For, the *poor Man's* Rags are the Badges of his Relation to *God*, and his *Wants* are the Mouths by which *God* himself intreats our Relief, and Succour; assuring us he will reckon it to ourselves, and accept it as kindly at our Hands, as if we had relieved him in *his own Person*. For he that hath *Pity upon the Poor* (saith the wise Man) *lendeth unto the Lord*, *Prov. xix. 17*. In which one Sentence, methinks, there is more Rhetorick, than in a whole Library of Sermons: And, surely, did we but understand, and consider it in its full *Emphasis*, we would not need such Volumes of Instructions, but might easily learn to be charitable by an *Epitome*.

“ O blessed God! that thou shouldst own thyself
 “ my Debtor, only for repaying thee a Part of
 “ what thou hast lent me, and of what is still
 “ thine own by an unalienable Propriety; that
 “ thou, who art the great Landlord of the World,
 “ should thus acknowledge thyself indebted to
 “ thy poor Tenant, for paying thee a small Quit-
 “ rent, a Pepper-Corn of Homage for what I hold
 “ in thy Right, and by thy Bounty!” And yet,
 thus it is he *lends* us our Estates, and then writes himself our *Debtor*, for that small Part which we *repay* him in Works of *Piety* and *Charity*. And as God puts our Alms to his own Account, so doth our Saviour also: For so, *Matth. xxv. 40*. *Inasmuch* (says he) *as ye have done it unto one of the*
least

least of these, my Brethren, ye have done it unto me; that is, I account myself obliged by it, and do receive it at your Hands with the same Kindness and Acceptance, as if you had been with me in my State of Humiliation, and shewed me all this Mercy in my own Person. And, when both God and my Saviour do send a poor Wretch to me in their own Name, and Person, and desire me, for their Sakes, and upon their Accounts, to relieve him; can I be either so ungrateful to them, to whom I am indebted for all that I have, or do hope for, or so wanting to my own Interest, as to neglect so fair an Opportunity of making them some Return of their Favours, and thereby obliging them to heap more Favours upon me? For, when in giving to the Poor, I give to God and my Saviour, what glorious Compensations, may I expect from such kind and liberal Pay-masters? He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully, says the Apostle, speaking of Alms, 2 Cor. ix. 6. For he sows in the richest Soil, in the fruitful Hands of God, and his Saviour; where the Seed being nourished with infinite Bounty, never fails to increase and multiply a thousand-fold. For God is not unrighteous, to forget your Work and Labour of Love which ye have shewed towards his Name, in that ye have ministered to the Saints, and do minister, Heb. vi. 10. Though he may sometimes defer, yet he never forgets to return a charitable Work: So that you may safely reckon upon it; that so much as you have bestowed in Works of Charity, so much, with vast Increase and Interest, you have secured to you in the Hands of God; who will either return it to you hither in temporal Blessings, or, which is a thousand Times better, repay it to you with infinite

finite Interest in the Weight of your *eternal* Crown. For so our Saviour promises the young Man, that if he would *give* what he had to the *Poor*, he should have *Treasure in Heaven*, Matth. xix. 21. So that by giving *Alms* we make Earth tributary to Heaven, and, in a nobler Sense than the new System of *Astronomy* teaches, advance it into a *Celestial* Body; and consequently, enrich not only *ourselves*, but our *Wealth*, too, by thus *transmitting* it to Heaven before us, as it were by *Bills of Exchange*, to be repaid us, when we come there in an *everlasting Treasure* of Happiness. And, when by relieving the *poor Man's* Needs, we may thus transmute our *Dross* into *Gold*, and, which is more, our *perishing* Gold into *immortal* Glory, what Man in his Wits would refuse any fair Opportunity of making such a *blessed Exchange*?

C H A P. IV.

Of the eternal Reasons and Grounds of Mercy.

HAVING shewn at large, what *Mercy* is, and to what particular *Duties* it extends, I shall now proceed to the second Thing, *viz.* the *Eternal Reasons*, upon which it is founded and rendered *morally good*. Which, I shall reduce to these five Particulars.

First, The Suitableness of it to the *Nature* of God.

Secondly, The Convenience of it, with the *Frame* and *Constitution* of *human Nature*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The *near* and *intimate Relation* of those Persons to us upon whom our Mercy is to be exercised.

Fourthly, The *Equitableness* of it to *our own State and Circumstances*.

Fifthly, The *Necessity* of it to the tolerable Well-being of *Human Society*.

I. One eternal Reason upon which *Mercy* is founded and rendered *morally good*, is the Suitableness of it to the *Nature* of *God*; which abounding, as it doth, with all the possible Kinds and Degrees of *Perfection*, is an *infinitely full* and *everlasting* Fountain of Happiness to *itself*; so that it cannot wish for any Kind, or any Degree of *Blessedness* beyond the Enjoyment of *itself*; and those infinite Complacencies it takes in its *own essential Beauties and Perfections*: And having such an *inexhaustible* Treasure of Happiness within *itself*, it can have no *Need* of, or *Dependence* upon, any thing *without* it; nor consequently be liable to any Temptation to oppress, or render others miserable, either for the *Security*, or *Augmentation* of its own Revenues: And as he who is *infinitely happy* can have no Temptation to render others *miserable*, so his own *Happiness* cannot but incline him to render the Miserable *happy*. For so, from a natural Principle of *Self-Love*, every Being stands inclined to beget, and propagate its own *Likeness*; and consequently every Being that is *happy* cannot but be inclined to make *others* so, so far as it consists with its own Interest. Since therefore *God* is not only happy in *himself*, but so securely happy, as that he can contribute what he pleases to the Happiness of *others* without any Prejudice to his own; his own *Self-Love* must

must necessarily incline him to beget his own *Likeness* on his Creatures, and so *propagate* his Happiness through the World. And being thus inclined by his own *Self-Love* to transform all other Beings into his *Likeness*, that is, to make them happy as he is happy; he must needs be tenderly affected with the Miseries of his Creatures, and immutably inclined, so far as it is just and wise, to *succour*, and *relieve*, and render them *happy*. Thus *Mercy*, you see, which is a good Will to the Miserable, doth most necessarily result from God's own *Self-Love*; and consequently is an inseparable *Principle* of his *Nature*: And accordingly God proclaims himself to *Moses*, *Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity and Transgressions*: And hence his *Mercy* is said to be *everlasting*, *Psal. c. 5.* and to be *from everlasting* *Psal. ciii. 17.* and to *endure for ever*, *Psal. cvi. 1.* and he is said to be *rich in Mercy*, *Ephes. ii. 4.* and is styled *the God of all Grace*, *1 Pet. v. 10.* and the *Father of Mercies*, *2 Cor. i. 3.* Now the *Nature* of God is the supreme *Example* and *Pattern* of all rational Natures; and so far forth as *ours* do swerve and deflect from *his*, they are maimed and imperfect. For his *Will* is our *Law*, not merely because it is his Will, but because it is over-ruled by the *infinite Perfections* of his Nature, by his Wisdom and Justice, his Mercy and Goodness; which if upon an *impossible* Supposition, he should will contrary to, *that Will* would be *no Law*, *i. e.* it would have no Force upon our Consciences to oblige us to obey it. So that the supreme Law is the *Nature* of God, by which his Will *is*, and all other Wills *ought* to be concluded

concluded and determined; and whatsoever we discover in *his* Nature, either by *Reason* or *Revelation*, that is communicable to *ours*, we ought to follow and imitate it as our sovereign *Pattern* and *Exemplar*. Since therefore, both *Reason* and *Revelation* do so plainly discover a most *merciful* Inclination in the *Nature* of God; this is an everlasting Reason why we should be merciful: And this is the Reason our Saviour urges, *Luke* vi. 36. *Be ye merciful as your Father also is merciful*; that is, Let it be seen that you are the *Children* of God, by your Participation of his *Nature*, which is infinitely *benevolent* to the Miserable; for there is nothing sinks you farther from God, or renders you more *unlike* him, than a *cruel* and *unmerciful* Temper: 'Tis this that blackens and deforms your Souls, that wreaths and distorts them into a *contrary* Figure, to the most amiable *Nature* of the Father of Spirits. For, as the highest Perfection is the *Nature* of God, and that is a most *merciful* one; so the lowest Imperfection is the *Nature* of *Devils*, and that is a most *cruel* one: And therefore, as by *Mercy* we incline towards the *Nature* of God, which is the *Land-mark* we ought to follow; so by *Cruelty* we decline towards the *Nature* of *Devils*, which is the *Sea-mark* we ought to avoid.

II. Another eternal Reason upon which *Mercy* is founded and rendered *morally Good*, is the Convenience of it, with the *Frame* and *Constitution* of *Human Nature*; in which the wise Author of Nature hath implanted a *natural Sympathy* between those that partake of it, in each others Pains and Pleasures. So, that though the *Human Nature* be largely *diffused*, and *spread* through infinite *Numbers*

of Individuals, which by vast Distances of Time, and Place, are separated from one another: Yet, as if it were but all one *common* Soul operating in *several* Bodies in *several* Times and Places, it feels almost in every *one* Body, what it enjoys, or suffers in every *other*; and whether it be pleased, or offended in *one* Individual, is pleased or offended in them *all*: And, though the Sense be *quickest* in that Individual Part, or Member of Human Nature, upon which the *Pain* or *Pleasure* strikes immediately; yet all the *rest*, how distant soever in Time, or Place, as soon as they have *Notice* of it, are sensibly *touched* and *affected* with it. For, thus when we read or hear of the Calamities of *other* Men, our Bowels yearn by a *natural Sympathy*, though they are never so distant from us, and are no otherwise related to us, than as they *partake* of our *Natures*: And, though they are long since dead, and out of the Reach of any Assistance, yet their Miseries, without any Motives of *Reason* or Discourse, strike us into a soft *Compassion*; yea, though we know the Calamities which we read or hear of, to be nothing but *Romantick Fictions*, yet the very *Imagination* of them is ready to melt us into Tears in Despite of our *Will* and our *Reason*. Nor, is this visible only in Persons that are *adult*, but even in little *Children*; who as soon as they are capable of taking Notice of Things, do without any *Reason* express themselves pained and afflicted with the dissembled *Griefs* and *Sufferings* of those that attend them. All which are most evident Instances of that general *Sympathy*, which naturally intercedes between all Men; since we can neither see, nor hear of, nor imagine *another's Miseries*, without being touched with a sensible *Pain* and *Affliction*. With

Against which I know no other Objection can be urged but this; that there are sundry Instances of Men, who seem to have arrived to that Degree of *Cruelty*, as to take Pleasure in afflicting *others*; and are so far from *sympathizing* with their Pains, that they rather seem to be *recreated* with them. To which I shall only answer these two things: *First*, That *that* Delight which some Men take in plaguing and afflicting *others*, proceeds not from their *natural Temper*, but is rather to be attributed to some violent *Effervescency*, and *Transport* of their Nature; such as are outrageous *Anger*, or deep and inveterate *Revenge*; under both which Nature is *discomposed* and *disordered*, and chased into a *preternatural Ferment*: And accordingly when it is cooled again, and reduced to a *composed Temper*, instead of *rejoicing* in the Mischiefs it hath done, it usually *bewails* and *laments* them, and reflects upon them with a great deal of *Horror* and *Remorse*. Which is a plain Argument, that Human Nature in itself is very *tender* and *compassionate*, how much soever it may be *accidentally* transported, by unnatural Passion superinduced upon it. *Secondly*, Suppose what is objected be true, that there are some Natures so *cankered*, and *diabolized*, as to be really pleased with the Pains and Miseries of *others*; the Instances of this Kind are so *few*, that they are only so many *Exceptions* to a *General Rule*; and therefore ought rather to be looked upon as so many *Monsters* of Men than as the Standards of *Human Nature*. For as we do not look upon it as *natural* to Men to be born without Hands or Feet, though there have been Instances of such *monstrous* and *unnatural* Births; so neither ought

we to think it *natural* to Men to be *cruel* and *unmerciful*, because of a *few* Devils in human Shape, that have pulled out their own Bowels of *Compassion*. If we would understand what is *humane* and *natural*, we must take our Measures from those who in all other Cases do live most conformably to the *Laws of Nature*; and to be sure the more *regular* Mens Natures are, the more you will find them abounding with *Pity* and *Compassion*. For hence it is that *Mercy* and *Compassion* are called *Good Nature* and *Humanity*, and their Contraries *ill Nature* and *Inhumanity*, because as the former are inseparable Properties of *well-formed* and *regulated* Natures; so the latter are such hideous *Deformities* of Nature, as do in Effect divest us of our *Manhood*, and render us a kind of *Monsters* among Men. By all which it is evident, that the great Creator hath framed and composed our Nature to *Mercy*, and implanted in it a *tender Sympathy* and *Fellow-feeling* of each others Miseries; by which, as by a Voice from Heaven, he doth eternally call upon us to let out these our *natural* Compassions into *Acts of Mercy* towards one another. For the Voice of *Nature* is a genuine *Echo*, and Repetition of the Voice of *God*; who, by creating in us such a *tender Sympathy* with one another, doth most expressly signify, that it is his Will that we should mutually *succour* and *relieve* each other. For to what other End should he create in me such a *Feeling* of my Brother's Miseries, but only to provoke me by it to *ease* and *succour* him? Why should he cause me to *partake*, as I do, of other Mens *Pains* and *Pleasures*, but to excite me thereby to use my best Endeavour to *assuage* their *Pains*, and *advance* their *Pleasures*?

Pleasures? Since therefore the God of Nature hath made my *Neighbour's* Misery my Pain, and *his* Content my Pleasure; and by the indissoluble Bands of mutual *Sympathy* hath linked our Fortunes and Affections together, so that it is for my *own* Ease to ease *him*, and for my *own* Pleasure to please *him*; this is an eternal and immutable Reason, why I should be *merciful* to him.

III. Another *eternal Reason* upon which *Mercy* is founded, and by which it is constituted *morally Good*, is the near and intimate *Relation* of those Persons to us, upon whom our *Mercy* is to be exercised. For there is between Men and Men a most intimate *Kindred and Relation*; as being all derived from one *common Root*, whose prolifick Sap hath sprouted into infinite Branches, which, like the Boughs of *Nebuchadnezzar's Tree*, have spread themselves to all the Ends of the Earth. And as we are all Children of the *same Parents*, and consequently *Brethren* by Nature, so we do all communicate of the *same Nature*, as being compounded of the same *Materials*, and animated with the same *Forms*, having all the *same* Faculties, Inclinations, Appetites and Affections; and being only so many several *Copies* transcribed from the same *Original*: And there is no other *Difference* between us, but what is made by things that are *extrinsick* and *accidental* to our Natures. So that, in short, we are *all* but *one* and the *same* Substance, attired in a diverse Garb of *Circumstances*, divided into several *Times* and *Places*, and diversified by the little *Accidents* of Colour and Stature, Figure and Proportions: In all which, perhaps, within a little while we shall *differ* as much from ourselves, as we do now

from *other* Men. For do but compare yourselves in your *Youth*, or in your *Health*, or in your *Prosperity*, with yourselves in your *Age*, or in your *Sickness*, or in your *Adversity*; and you will find as much *Difference* between yourselves and yourselves, as you do now between yourselves and *others*: So that in Reality *other* Men are as much *you* now, as *you* are yourselves in other Circumstances; we being all the same in every *stable, essential* Ingredient of our Natures, and being only diversified by such *Accidents* from one another, as will in a little Time diversify us from ourselves. Thus the Apostle says, *Acts* xvii. 26. *He hath made of one Blood*, that is, of one Nature, *all Nations of Men to dwell on the Face of the Earth*. There being therefore such a close Conjunction, such a strict Union of *Natures* between Men and Men, so that every *other* Man is every other Man's *self*, a few trifling Circumstances excepted; this is an everlasting Reason, why we should treat *them* as we do ourselves, with all Compassion and Humanity. For to commiserate *one* who is my other *self*, is that which I am obliged to by my own *Self-Love*, which God hath made an eternal *Law* to my *Nature*: It is to feed a Member of my own *Body*, and nourish a Branch of my own *Root*; yea, it is to feed and succour my own *Nature*, that is only individuate from mine, by I know not what *metaphysical* Principle, and cloathed in different *Accidents*, and *Circumstances*. So that now the very same *Self-Love*, which doth so importunately instigate us upon all Occasions to redress our *own* Miseries, ought in all Reason to provoke us to relieve and succour *other* Men; since all the Miseries *they* endure are the Miseries of *our own* Nature: infomuch

inſomuch that we ruin *their* Fortunes, and by a natural Communion are *Partakers* of *their* Pains and Pleaſures. For the *Human Nature* which is common to *us* and *them*, endures the Smart of their Afflictions, and bleeds through every Wound that is given them; ſo that by pouring into thoſe Wounds the Baſam of our *Mercy*, we do an Act of *Kindneſs* to ourſelves, and wiſely conſult our *own* Preſervation. As, on the contrary, by dealing cruelly and unmercifully by other Men, we do *affront* and *violate* our *own* Natures; and moſt unnaturally thwart that Principle of *Self-Love*, which God hath implanted in us for our own Preſervation. For he whom thou treateſt with ſo much *Contempt* and *Cruelty*, is thy own ſelf individuated into another Perſon; and wears thy *Nature* under other Circumſtances: he is Man of thy Manhood, Fleſh of thy Fleſh, and Bone of thy Bone; and *no Man ever yet hated his own Fleſh, but nourisheth and cheriſheth it*, Eph. v. 29. Wherefore thou canſt not deal cruelly by *him*, without wounding thyſelf through his Sides, and committing an *unnatural Outrage* upon the *Human Nature*, whereof he is equally *Partaker* with thee.

IV. Another *eternal Reason* upon which *Mercy* is founded, and rendered *morally Good*, is the *Equitableneſs* of it to our own State and Circumſtances: for no Man ever was, or ever can be ſo happy, as not to have *need* of *Mercy* for himſelf. The *beſt* of Men are *Sinners* before God, and for that are liable without a World of *Mercy* to be rendered miſerable for ever; and there are very *few* whoſe Converſations with Men have been ſo inoffenſive, as never to have merited *ſevere Retributions* at their Hands: and how *happy* and

prosperous soever a Man's outward State and Circumstances may be at *present*, he cannot be *secure* but the next turn of Affairs may tumble him headlong hence into *Wretchedness* and *Calamity*. Now since every Man *might* have been, or *may* be miserable, what can be more *just* or *equitable*, than that we should deal with *those* that are so, as we would be dealt by if *we* were so? Put the Case then, as you may very reasonably do, that *you* were now as miserable as that *wretched* Creature is that craves your Succour and Relief; would not *you* desire Relief with the same *Importunity* that *he* doth? Doubtless you would; the Sense of *Misery*, and the Desire of *Mercy* being naturally inseparable: Well, but why would *you* desire it? Why, *because you are miserable*, you would say: And hath not *he* the same Reason to desire it of *you*? You may *want* what *he* *desires*, and if you should, you cannot deny but you should *desire* the *same*: And is there not all the Reason in the World, why you should *grant* him what you would *ask* for yourself, if you were in his Circumstances, and he in your's? This, therefore is eternally reasonable, that we should *give* and *ask* by the same Measures, that we should *grant* that Succour to those that are miserable, which we should think fit to *ask* or *desire* of them, were we as *miserable* as they, and they as happy as we. For since we are all of us naturally *equal*, whatsoever is fit for *one*, must be fit for *another* in *equal* Circumstances. Either therefore it is not fit, that I should *desire* Relief from others when I am miserable, or else it is fit, that I should *grant* Relief to others when they are so; Which if I refuse, I must condemn myself, either for being *unreasonable* in desiring Mercy when I

need

need it, or for being *unjust* in denying Mercy when I am *asked* it. I know, I may be miserable myself; and if ever I am, I know, I cannot forbear desiring *others* to succour and relieve *me*: And can I blame them for desiring that of *me*, which I could not forbear desiring of *them*, were I in their Circumstances and *they* in *mine*? And yet of Necessity I must either blame them for *desiring* of *me* what they do, or blame myself for *refusing* them what *they* desire; since whatsoever is *just* for them to desire of *me*, is very fit and *reasonable* for me to grant them: And if ever I should happen to want *Relief*, with what Face can I *desire* or *expect* it, who am deaf and inexorable to the Wants of *others*? So that if I will *shew* no Mercy, I were best take heed that I never *need* any; for if I should, it will be very *unreasonable* for me to expect it; because by my *unmerciful* Treatment of *others*, I have made a *Precedent* against *myself*; against which it would be Impudence for me to plead for Mercy, either with God, or Men. With what Face can I supplicate for *Mercy* from the Hands of others, when I have so plainly declared by my *Actions*, that, were I in their Stead, and they in *mine*, I would never grant *them* what I ask for? And when my *Actions* do thus loudly deprecate the *Mercies* which I pray for, and enter such an unanswerable *Caveat* against my Claim and Pretence to them, it is but modest to let fall my Suit, and give up my Hope of *Mercy* for ever.

Fifthly and *Lastly*, Another *eternal* Reason upon which *Mercy* is founded and rendred *morally Good*, is the Necessity of it to the tolerable Well-being of *Human Societies*. That *God* is *good* and *merciful* to his Creatures, hath been sufficiently demonstrated

from the *infinite* Beatitude of his Nature; which being an *unbounded* Ocean of Bliss and Happiness to itself, must needs be abundantly communicative of Bliss and Happiness to *others*, according to the *Capacities* of their *Natures*. Since therefore *Human Nature*, of all these sublunary Ones, contains the largest *Capacities* of Happiness, we may be sure that God not only *designs* its Welfare, but that he hath made all the *Provisions* for it that are necessary in order thereunto. Notwithstanding which, you see he hath at *present* exposed it to so many evil *Accidents* and *Contingencies*, that unless those that are *happy* will take some Care of the *Miserable*, and we will all of us *mutually* succour and relieve one another, there is not a *sufficient Provision* made for our tolerable well-being in this World. Since therefore it is evident, even from the *eternal Principles* of God's Nature, that he is infinitely *kind* and *benevolent* to us; and yet notwithstanding this, he hath placed us in a Condition wherein we need *one another's* Mercy, and cannot be happy without it; it necessarily follows, that it is his Will and Pleasure that wherein soever he hath left us unprovided, we should *mutually* provide for one another; and that our *own Mercy* should be instead of a *Counterpart* to supply those *Defects* and void *Spaces*, which his Providence hath left us in our present Happiness. For we being *free Agents*, God did not so provide for our Happiness as to *exclude* our own *Virtue* from having a Hand in it; but hath only taken Care so to dispose and order our Affairs, as that we may be happy if we will *contribute* our *Part*, and behave ourselves towards *him*, *ourselves*, and one *another*, so as is most conducive to our *own*, and one
another's

another's Welfare. Since therefore, he *designs* that *all* should be happy, and in order thereunto, though he hath not actually *made* them so, yet hath fairly *provided* that all may be so; it is plain he hath left something to be done on *our Part*, and expects we should every one *contribute* what we are able towards every *other* Man's Happiness. When therefore, God places *another's Happiness*, or any Degree of it, within the Power of *my Mercy*; it is plain that it is with an Intent I should employ that *Power* to make him happy; and consequently, that if I *lavish* out upon my own Pleasures and Conveniencies, that *Power* to relieve the *Miserable*, with which he hath intrusted me, and so permit them to *continue* miserable, I am an *unfaithful* Steward to *his Trust*, and *responsible* to him for all *their* Miseries. In short, since God, by the eternal *Bent* and *Inclination* of his Nature, aims at, and intends our Happiness; but yet hath put us into a Condition, *wherein*, without the *Assistance* of each other's *Mercy* we cannot be tolerably happy; this is a plain Demonstration, that it is *his Will* we should *assist* and *further* his Intention, by being *merciful* to one another. Whilst therefore, God permits *Misery* in one, that is an immutable Reason why he should exact *Mercy* from another; since without that he can never obtain his *End*, which is the *Happiness* of *all*. For, as since by the Laws of *Generation* he hath ordered all Men to come into the World *weak* and *helpless*, and *unable* to provide for themselves; he was bound in *Goodness* to oblige their Parents by a *natural* *society* and Affection, to *nourish* and take *Care* of them till they grow able to take Care for *themselves*, that so they might not be utterly *abandoned*: So since he hath
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thought good to *expose* us here to so many *Miseries* and *Calamities*; he stood obliged, by the *eternal Benignity* of his Nature, to oblige us by all the Bowels of *Mercy* to *succour* and *relieve* one another, till we are grown up to that *Perfection* of *Happiness*, wherein we shall have no more Need of Succour; that so at present we may not be left *desitute* and *forlorn*, but may find all that Relief in one another's *Mercy*, which is wanting to us in his *immediate Providence*. For 'tis for *wise* and *merciful* Ends that he permits us to be *miserable* here, to *correct* our Follies, and polish and *cultivate* our Nature, and *train* us up under a severe Discipline into a State of *Everlasting Happiness*; and therefore for the Redress of these *Miseries*, which for our *Good* he is fain to inflict upon us, it was *necessary* he should consign us to the Protection of one another's *Mercy*: that so this, for the *present*, might be a Cordial to our *Griefs*, a Supply to our *Wants*, an Ease to our *Oppressions*, and a Sanctuary to our *Calamities*; till *Misery* hath effected the gracious *End* she designed it for, and then he will *release* our *Mercy* from its Work, and permit it to enjoy an *Everlasting Sabbath*. But so long as he thinks fit to *continue* us in this State of *Misery*, his own *Benignity* will oblige *him* to oblige *us* to *assist* and *comfort* one another, by the *mutual* Exercise of our *Mercy*; that so being instead of *Gods* to one another, we may not be utterly *abandoned* to Wretchedness; but by *mutually succouring* each other, might all of us be tolerably happy: Which we should all of us most certainly be, were we but so *benign* and *merciful* to one another, as he *expects* and *requires*.

C H A P. I.

Of the Nature of MORTIFICATION.

GOD having made us *free* Agents, and planted in our Natures an uncontrollable *Liberty of Choice*; in Wisdom he hath so ordered and disposed Things, that as we cannot be *miserable* unless we *will*, so neither shall we be *happy* whether we *will* or *no*. For as his *Goodness* would not suffer him to make us necessarily *miserable*, so neither would his *Wisdom* permit him to entail our *Happiness* on our Natures, and make it inseparable to our Beings; for should he have done so, he must have altered the *Laws* of his own *wise Creation*, and made those Beings to act *necessarily*, which he made to act *freely*. For *Happiness* is the *End* of all our Actions; and therefore, should God have made that *necessary* to us, he must have made us to act towards it with the same *Necessity* as inanimate Bodies do towards their proper Center; and consequently there would have been no such thing, as a *free Agent* in the lower World. That we may always act therefore, according to the Condition and Frame of a *free Nature*, the Foundations of all our *Happiness* and *Misery* are laid in the *right Use*, or *Abuse* of our *Liberty*; and do immediately spring out of the *Wisdom*, or *Folly* of our own *Choices*: So that if we chuse *wisely* according to the *Laws of Virtue* and right *Reason*, we do thereby advance towards that *happy* and *heavenly* State we were

were created for : As, on the contrary, if we chuse *foolishly* according to the rash Counsels of our own *vicious Appetites* and *sensual Inclinations*, we thereby sink ourselves deeper and deeper towards the Abyss of endless and inconceivable *Misery*. For such is the Frame and Constitution of our *Natures*, that we cannot be *good* and *miserable*, nor *vicious* and *happy* : And accordingly the Apostle sets before us the inevitable Fate of our own Actions, *Rom. viii. 13. If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye, through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

What these *Deeds* of the *Flesh*, or *Body* are, the Apostle tells us, *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. The Works of the Flesh are manifest, which are these ; Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereses, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like ; and they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* This is the *Muster-roll* of that formidable Army of Wickednesses with which we are to engage, and which we must vanquish, or perish for ever. *If ye mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live ; i. e.* If ye kill and destroy them, if ye wholly *cease* from them, both as to the *outward* Act of them, and the *inward* Appetite and Inclination towards them : For *Mortification* doth not only consist in a formal Abstinence from the *outward* Acts of Sin, or a superficial Skinning over the Orifice of its Wounds ; but searches to the very Bottom of that putrid Core *within*, and eats out the *inward Corruption*, from whence those outward Blisters arise : It purges the *Heart* as well as the *Hands*, and drains those *impure Inclinations*, which are the *Springs* of all Impiety and Wickedness. But

But to handle this Subject more particularly, I shall do these three Things :

First, Shew wherein *Mortification* consists. .

Secondly, What are the proper, *Instruments* of it.

Thirdly, What are the most prevailing *Motives* of it.

First, Wherein doth *Mortification* consist? I answer in these three Things. 1. In *Abstinence* from the *outward* Acts of Sin. 2. In not *consenting* unto any Sin. 3. In a *constant* Endeavour to extinguish our *involuntary* Sins.

I. *Mortification* requires *Abstinence* from the *outward* Acts of Sin : For it is impossible that any Man should mortify his Lusts, while he indulges himself in the free *Practice* of them ; because *Practice* is the Fuel that *foments* and *feeds* the inward vicious *Inclinations*, and both *pampers* and *enrages* the lustful *Appetites* of the Soul. For that *Delight* which we reap from acting our own Concupiscences, doth but *increase* and *provoke* them ; it being *natural* to Men, when they have been *pleased* with any Action, to be more vehemently inclined to *repeat* it ; the *Delight* which they found in the former Enjoyment *provoking* their Desires to enjoy it again. So that we may as well hope to put out a *Fire* by a continual feeding it with *Fuel*, and blowing it into *Flame*, as to mortify a *Lust*, whilst by our continued *practising* it we *nurse* and *cherish* it, and do at once *both feed and irritate* its Flames. If therefore we would ever *mortify* the Lusts of the Flesh, we must strictly *restrain* ourselves from all *outward* Acts of them : For, whilst we indulge ourselves in *these*, we feed our Disease, and pamper our
bad

bad *Inclinations* into vicious *Habits*, and our vicious *Habits* into sinful *Necessities*.

II. Mortification consists in the Dissent of our *Wills* from all *sinful* Proposals. 'Tis no Piece of *Mortification* for a Man to abstain only from the *outward* Acts of Sin, if in the mean Time his *Will* is so far *consenting* to it, as that he would practise it, were it not for some intervening *Hindrances*, or for *Want* of a fair *Opportunity*. For, in the Eye *God*, to which our inmost *Thoughts* and *Purposes* are all open and unmasked, the *Will* to sin is the *Sin* that is willed, though it should never proceed into *Action*: With him it is *acted* as soon as it is *conceived*, and it is *conceived* as soon as ever it is thought of with *Consent*: It grows in the *Delight* we take in the *Speculation* of it, but is *ripened* in the Resolution of *committing* it. For, when once we are *resolved* upon it, our *Heart* hath done its utmost towards it; and so our *consenting* to it makes it *perfect* Sin, though it should never break out into *Action*. So that 'tis Nonsense to talk of *mortifying* our Sin, while it hath the Consent of our *Wills*; for, though it is more *dangerous* in the *Action*, and approaches nearer to an *Habit*, because the Consent *continues* all the while we commit it, and is *confirmed* by the *Pleasure* we reap in the Commission; yet still it is *Sin*, though it is only *consented* to; and it lives in the *Purpose*, though it breaths not out into the *Practice*. Our Enemy is not conquered, when it is only shut up within its *Holds*; and it doth but fortify itself *within*, while it wants *Opportunities* to sally out into *Action*. If we do not sin, only because we *cannot*, or because we want *Opportunity*, we are but *Devils* in *Chains*; and are never the less

less *guilty*, because we *cannot* do as much *Mischief* as we *would*: For he that *would* sin if he *could*, hath sinned *already* as far as he is *able*; and so is every whit as *criminal* in the Account of God, as he that doth sin when he *can*. The *Mortification* of our Lusts, therefore, doth necessarily imply the withdrawing the *Consent* of our *Wills* from them, and the final divorcing them from the Embraces of our *Choice*; for while they enjoy our *Consent*, they live in us, and *rule* us, though they should never have the Opportunity to come abroad into our Practice.

III. Mortification consists in a *constant Endeavour* to subdue our *involuntary* Appetites and Inclinations to sin. It is not sufficient that we do not *practice* Sin, nor *consent* to the Practice of it; but we must make it our *constant Endeavour* to wean, and abstract ourselves from those *evil Tendencies* and *Inclinations*, which we have contracted by our former Sins: For though these *Inclinations* remaining in us are no farther our *Sin*, than we do *yield* and *consent* to them; yet, while we patiently *harbour* them within our Bosoms, and do not honestly endeavour to *smother* and *extinguish* them, they are *chosen* and *voluntary*, and have the very *Bane* and *Formality* of Sin in them. Though we should be disabled from *Acts* of *Adultery*, yet while we retain with *Delight* our *Inclinations* towards it and quietly *please* ourselves in the fantastick Joys of it; while we freely entertain its *lewd* and *filthy Ideas*, and suffer them to walk to and fro upon the Stage of our *Fancies* without *Check* or *Controul*, we are still *adulterous* in the Sight of God, to whom our Lust is as obvious within the *Closet* of our Minds, as upon the *Theatre* of our Practice. We
must

must not think therefore that our Sin is *mortified*, because we neither *practice* nor *consent* to the Practice of it; for, while we have any *Inclinations* to sin remaining in us, we must endeavour to *subdue* and *conquer* them. If we do not, we have only forced our Enemy into his last Retreat, where by our own *Neglect* we give him Opportunity to rally and reinforce himself against us: For our Sin still lives in our *Inclination* to sin, and will not soon, if it be not beaten thence, recover its broken Forces, and grow as formidable as ever. 'Tis true, he that doth not *consent* to his own evil Appetites, but constantly *denies* them those *vicious Gratifications* which they crave, takes an infallible Course to *starve* and *destroy* them: For as *these* were first raised in us and afterwards nourished into Nature by our vicious *Practices*; so by refusing to practise those Sins which they incline us to, and by practising the *contrary Virtues*, we shall by Degrees *abate* the Strength and Vigour of them: and as *they* decay, so *holy Inclinations* will spring up in their Room; which being *heightened* and made *intense* by a constant Practice of *Holiness*, will by Degrees *expel* these our *vicious Inclinations*, and grow into *Nature* and *Habit*. But merely to abstain from the *outward Acts* of Sin, is a *tedious* Way of mortifying our *inward Inclinations* towards it; for *vicious Appetites* will live a great while, even upon *innocent Gratifications*. Though we should be *drunk* no more, yet, if we indulge ourselves the *utmost Liberties* of Sobriety, that will *continue* our Appetite to *Intemperance*: Though we should abstain from all *outward Acts* of *Lasciviousness*, yet, unless we *deny* ourselves some of the *lawful Pleasures* of the Body, these will *foment*

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our wanton *Inclinations*: Though we should not suffer our *Rage*, and *Spite*, and *Malice* to express themselves in any prohibited *Actions*; yet if we allow ourselves, even in *lawful* Anger, and *just* Resentments of Injuries, this will for a great while *preserve* and keep *alive* our most black and devilish *Propensions*. And besides that, this Way of *abstaining* merely from Sin will make the Business of Mortification *tedious*, it is also full of *Hazard* and *Difficulty*: For he that only *abstains* from Sin, and *gratifies* his Inclinations as far as *lawfully* he may, is every Moment in *Danger* of exceeding the Line that parts the *utmost* of what is *lawful* from the *nearest* of what is *sinful*. For *Inclination*, like all other Motions, is always *swiftest* when it is nearest its *Center*; and when once it is within the *Reach* and *Attraction* of its *beloved* Vice, then it hurries towards it with *Fury* and *Impatience*; insomuch that many times our *Conscience* proves too *weak* to stop the Course of its *impetuous* Motions: And then when once it hath *tasted* the forbidden Pleasure of its Sin, it immediately *recovers* all its *impaired* *Strength*, and many times grows more *fell* and *outrageous* than ever; and so the Ground we got in a Month's *Abstinence* from our Sin, we lose again in a Moment's *enjoying* it; by which Means the Work of *Mortification* becomes extremely *difficult* and *hazardous*. Wherefore if ever we mean to *conquer* our *bad Inclinations*, we must not only *abstain* from the *Sins* we are inclined to, but also from the *Occasions* of them. If it be *Sensuality*, we must starve it out by prudent *Fasting* and *Abstinence*; if *Devilishness*, we must force it out by *thwarting* and *contradicting* it in the Course of our Practice, and keep

it at the greatest *Distance* from it : For *evil Inclinations* are not to be mortified without *Force* and *Violence*, and like *crooked Staves*, the speediest Way to make them *strait*, is to keep them bent for a while the *contrary* Way. This therefore is implied in our honest *Endeavour* to *mortify* our *involuntary Inclinations* to sin, that we do not only forbear the *Sin* itself, but avoid the *Occasions* that lead to it; and *deny* ourselves those *lawful Liberties*, which do nearly approach it, and set us upon the Brink of it. And thus you see wherein *Mortification* consists, namely in abstaining from the *outward Act*, and *inward Consent* to sin, and in a *constant Endeavour* to mortify those *involuntary Inclinations* to sin, which we have contracted in any former Course of wilful Sinning.

C H A P. II.

Of the Means and Instruments of Mortification.

HAVING explained wherein *Mortification* consists, I proceed in the next Place to consider what are the *Means* and *Instruments* of it : And these are chiefly these Six ;

First, *Faith*.

Secondly, *Consideration*.

Thirdly, *Resolution*.

Fourthly, *Discipline*.

Fifthly, *Frequent receiving of the Sacrament*.

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Sixthly,

Sixthly, *Constant Prayer.*

I. *Faith*, or a thorough *Belief* of the Truth of our *Religion*; which will furnish us with such *Arguments* against our *Lusts*, as all the *Temptations* they can muster up will never be able to *resist*. Hence *St. John* tells us, that *this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith*, 1 Eph. ver. 4. where by the *World* we are to understand all those *Temptations* to sin, that do arise from these outward worldly Objects wherewithal we are here surrounded. *Faith* therefore must needs be a mighty *Instrument* of *mortifying* our Sins, it being the *Victory* whereby we overcome all the *Temptations* to them: And indeed a firm *Belief* of the mighty Arguments of *Christianity* is in itself such an *efficacious Means* to dissuade us from sinning, that one would think it were impossible for the most *bold* and *resolute* Sinner to *withstand* it. For who but a *mad Man* would prostitute himself to the *Charms* and *Flatteries* of a base *Lust*, that believes that *Promise* which proposes a *Heaven* of *immortal Joys* to dissuade him from it? Who would be *frighted* into any Sin by the most amazing *Danger* that can threaten, or befall him, that credits that *Threat* which denounces a *Hell* of *endless* and *intolerable Woes* against every wilful Transgression? Did we but *believe*, that it cost the Son of God his dearest Blood to *redeem* us from our Sins; how could we be so *disingenuous* to our best *Friend*, as to *harbour* those Lusts that were *his Murderers*, and which he *abhors* more than the *Spear* that pierced his Side, or the *Nails* that gored his Hands and Feet? Yea, how could we be so *fool-hardy* as to *dally* with those Sins, which are so infinitely *odious* unto God, that he would not be *atoned*

for them by any *meaner* Sacrifice than the *Blood* of his *own* Son? In a word, Did we but *believe*, that we must all *appear* before the Judgment-Seat of *Christ*, to give a *strict Account* for whatsoever we have done in the *Flesh*; What *Temptation* could there be great enough to balance our Fear of that *dreadful Tribunal*? Doubtless, did we but heartily *believe* our *Holy Religion*, there is nothing in all the *World* would be so *terrible* as *Sin* to us; the mighty Arguments of the *Gospel* would so *over-awe* us, that we should not be able to think of it without *Horror* and *Amazement*; the very *Sight* of it would scare us like an *Apparition*, and cause us to run away from it in as great a *Fright*, as if the Devil himself were at our Heels. For, Lord! can I be so stupid, as to hug my *Lusts*, while I *believe* that I shall rue for it to all *Eternity*? Can I be so senseless of my own *Interest*, as to treat and entertain those *Vices*, which I verily *believe* will rob me of all that an *everlasting Heaven* means? No, no; Did I but *believe* the Propositions of the *Gospel*, doubtless I should sooner trust my *Body* among ravenous *Cannibals*, than my *Soul* among my *Sins*, and think myself much safer among *Vipers* and *Scorpions*, than in the Embraces of my *Lusts*; which whilst they wrap themselves in *amorous* Folds about me, *sting* me with an *everlasting Venom*. But our Misery is, that we are most of us *Christians* by *Chance*; and have taken up our *Religion* upon *Trust*, without ever satisfying ourselves of its *Credibility*, or troubling ourselves to enquire *why* or *wherefore* we profess it: So that though perhaps we do not absolutely *disbelieve*, yet neither can we be properly said to *believe* it; it being a Matter

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we never troubled ourselves about, so as to *enquire* whether it be *true* or *false* ; and therefore it is no great Wonder, that it hath so *little Effect* upon us. For how can it be expected, that we should be *affected* with that which we do not *believe* ; or be persuaded to part with those *Lusts* that are so *dear* to us, upon *Proposals* that we give *no Credit* to, and of whose *Truth* or *Falshood* we never troubled ourselves to *enquire* ? Let us therefore but satisfy our own *Reason* of the Truth of our *Religion*, by considering impartially those mighty *Evidences* it is founded upon ; and then it will soon captivate our Souls into the *Love* and *Obedience* of it ; and none of our *Lusts* will be able to withstand its mighty *Force* and *Efficacy*, but will all be *forced* to fall down before it, as *Dagon* did before the *Ark* of the *Lord*. This therefore is the first *Instrument* of *Mortification*, viz. a hearty *Belief* of the Christian *Religion*.

II. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is *Consideration*. For we have no other *Way* to mortify our *Lusts*, but only by *Reason* and *Argument*, and it is impossible that any *Arguments* should persuade us, unless we duly *consider* the *Strength* and *Force* of them. It is true, our *Religion* furnishes us with sufficient *Arguments* to baffle all the *Temptations* of Sin : But what will it signify to have good *Arguments* in our *Bibles*, while they are out of our *Thoughts*, and are not at all *regarded* by us ? Do we expect they should cure our *Souls*, as *Charms* and *Amulets* do our *Bodies*, merely by being written upon *Paper*, and worn in our *Bosoms* ? Why then may they not as well charm a *Swine* into *Cleanliness*, or a savage *Tiger* out of his natural

Fierceness and Cruelty? But, alas! all the Arguments in the World to an *inconsiderate* Mind, are but like so many Arrows shot against an *Anvil*, where they cannot stick but are forced to rebound and fly off again without making any *Impression* on it. And hence in the Parable of the *Seed*, the Reason which our Saviour assigns why it prospered not in the *High-way*, the *stony* and *thorny* Ground, was either that they *considered* not *at all*, or not *enough*, Mat. xiii. 19, 20 21, 22. either they were *wholly inconsiderate*, so that the Seed of God's Word lay scattered upon the Surface of their Minds, like Corn upon the High-way, to be *picked*, and *devoured* by the Fowls of the Air; or they *considered* but a *little*, so that the Divine Seed being not thoroughly rooted in them, produced only a present Fit, and Pang of Religion, which in the Heat of the next Temptation *withered* and *died* away; or else they *considered* but by *halves*, their Minds being all over-grown with worldly Cares and Thoughts, which quickly choked that Holy Seed, and rendered it *barren* and *unfruitful*. Thus *Inconsideration*, you see, will render the most *powerful* Motives *insignificant*; and it will be to no Purpose for *Religion* to knock at the Door of our Souls, while our Reason is *asleep*, and our Understandings *deaf* to its Importunities. But would we but be so true to our own Interest, as to inure ourselves to a thorough *Consideration* of our *Religion*, that would arm us with such *invincible* Arguments, as none of our Lusts would be able to withstand; and we should have so many good Thoughts, like *Guardian Angels*, perpetually encamped about us, that whensoever the *Devil* or the *World* besieged us, they would find our Souls *impregnable* fortified

fortified against all their Batteries. If in the Morning, before we go into the World, we would sit down a while, and take a little Pains to *antidote* our Souls with such Thoughts as these; *O my Soul! now am I going into the midst of a Crowd of Temptations, where ever and anon one bad Object or other will be beckoning to me, and inviting me unto that which is evil; let us therefore consider a little what Answer we shall return to all their Importunities: By and by perhaps some great Opportunity of Gain may present itself before thee, to tempt thee to a Fraud or Cozenage; but alas! What a poor Recompense will a little Money be for all that Eternity of Misery, whereunto I shall consign myself by it? Can I carry this sorry Pelf thither with me? Or, if I could, can I bribe my Flames, or corrupt my Tormentors with it? And shall I, for such a trifling momentary Gain, incur such an everlasting Damage? When I have thus answered this Temptation, perhaps immediately after some amorous Object may present itself, to court me to the Harlot's Bed; but, O my Soul! Will the Pleasures I am promised there compensate the Loss of all that Heaven of immortal Joys, which I shall forfeit by it? And if they will not, as doubtless they will not, shall I be so childish, as for the Pleasures of a Moment to extinguish all my Hope of being pleased for ever? And when thou hast thus baffled this Temptation, perhaps thou mayst be solicited anew with some importunate Invitation to Intemperance; but, O my Soul! Remember the bitter Agonies that thy Saviour endured upon the Score of thy Sins; how this among the rest filled his deadly Cup, and vomited it full of Gall and Vinegar; and can I be so senseless as to make light of any Sin, the Guilt whereof was so heavy as to crush the*

Lord of Life into his Grave? Shall I be so disingenuous as to gratify any Lust, that had a Hand in the Murder of my dearest Saviour, my Saviour who loves me a Thousand times better than I love myself? And now no sooner hast thou repulsed this Temptation, but perhaps, some other may assault thee; thou mayst be presented with a favourable Opportunity of treating thy Lusts so privately and securely, as that no Eye shall discover thee; and then how difficult will it be for thee to refuse such an inviting Occasion: But consider, O my Soul! thou art always and every where under the Inspection of thy Judge, by whose righteous Doom thou must stand or fall for ever; and he that sees what thou dost in private, will one Day call thee to account, and openly unmask all thy Actions, and present them barefaced, upon the publick Theatre, before all the World of Spirits; unless, therefore, thou couldst find a Place to be wicked in, where God might not see thee, it is in vain to promise thyself Coverts and Retirements; for he will one Day bring to Light all thy Deeds of Darkness, and display thy Shame to the open View of the World: Would we, I say, but take the Pains every Morning, before we enter into the World, to season and antidote our Souls with such Meditations as these, it would, doubtless, mightily contribute to the Mortification of our Lusts. For this would make the Arguments of our Religion so familiar to us, that no Temptations whatsoever would be able to baffle our Resolutions; which being back'd with such a Strength of Reason, would stand like a Rock of Adamant, outbraving the Fury of those Waves that dash themselves against it, and forcing them to retire, after all their threatning Rage, in empty and insignificant Foams. For what Temptation can be too hard
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for that Soul, that is armed with the Hope of *Heaven* and the Fear of *Hell*; and is furnished with Arguments from all the *Quarters* of *Reason* and *Religion*, to oppose against it? This, therefore, is another of those *Means* and *Instruments*, by which we are to *mortify* our Lusts; *viz.* a serious Consideration of the *Motives* and *Arguments* whereby we are to oppose them.

III. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is a hearty and well-grounded *Resolution*: and, indeed, without a *firm Resolution* it is in vain for us to attempt the *mortifying* of our Lusts, or any *difficult* Undertaking whatsoever. For there is a wide Distance between *Thoughts* and *Things*, and it is much easier to *discourse* of Things than to pass them into *Execution*: For *clear Reasonings* are accompanied with a wonderful Delight, because there we engage only with *Designs*; and fighting only with the *Ideas* of Things, they will easily suffer themselves to be conquered by us, and taken Captive at our Will: But when we pass into *Practice*, that will revolt and oppose us in the *Execution*, which was so very compliant in the *Thought* and *Meditation*; then you will find that you must *wrestle* stoutly with those *Difficulties* that will make Head against you, and that these will put you to a greater Proof of your *Valour* and Constancy than ever you did imagine; so that unless you are armed with a great Strength of *Resolution*, you will be beaten off at the first Attempt, and meeting with greater *Resistance* than you expected, be forced upon a base and cowardly *Retreat*. Now to form a *firm Resolution* requires a great deal of *Prudence* and good *Conduct*; for it is a great avail in all Cases to *begin well*; and as a Foundation
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well laid, doth secure the Superstructure, so a *Resolution* well formed, will render the *Execution* of what we are to do, a great Deal more easy and feasible. Before we do resolve, therefore, on *mortifying* our *Lusts*, let us be sure to make use of the former *Instrument* of *Mortification*; that is, let us acquaint ourselves with all those mighty Arguments against Sin, wherewith either our *Reason* or *Religion* can furnish us; and let us consider them over and over, till they are *familiar* to our Understandings, and our *Thoughts* have extracted the *utmost Force* of them: For which End it will be necessary for us, to seek Direction from our *Spiritual Guides*. Then let us seriously consider with ourselves, *what* it is that we are about to do, what *Vices* we must divorce, and what *Virtues* we must espouse; and let us thoroughly inform ourselves before-hand of all the foul *Ways*, and steep *Ascents*, and dangerous *Precipices* that are in the Road of our Duty: And then as you go along in your Meditations, ask your own Hearts, whether there be any Passage that they *startle* at, or whether, notwithstanding all, they are *seriously willing* you should go on? Remonstrate to your own Souls, that in such a Place your *Lust* will be tempting you with the *genial Pleasures* of an *adultrous Bed*, and desire them to deal *plainly* with you whether they can be deaf to those *bewitching Invitations*; tell them, that before you have gone many Paces farther, the Wants of *poorer Men* than yourselves will be soliciting your *Charity*, and desire to know of them whether they are willing you should *do Good* and *trust God* for a Repayment; represent to them, how highly you may be *provoked* at the next Step by the *injurious*

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Carriage of some insolent *Adversary*, and know of them, whether they are willing to *contain* their savage *Passions* within the Bars of *Reason* and *Sobriety*; and so go on in your own *Thoughts* through all the Parts of your *Duty*, and never cease putting these, and such like *Questions*, distinctly to our own Souls, till they give an *express Consent* to every *Duty* that presses for a Resolution. And it will very much conduce to the settling of a *fixed Judgment* in you, if you do not conclude too *soon*, but *weigh* all these Things over again; if you would ask yourselves the next Morning, whether you still *continue* of the same Mind, and whether your former *Consent* was not the Effect of a *present Heat*, or whether now, after the Cool of the Night you do *still allow* of it; for, in all Probability if you *resolve* in haste, you will *repent* at Leisure. And this, I doubt not, is the Bane of most of our good *Resolutions*, that generally, they are the Effects of some *transitory Passion*, and not of a *sober Judgment* and *serious Deliberation*: For, when Men resolve well in Heats of *Passion*, they resolve to do, they know not what themselves, but swallow their Religion by the *Lump*, without considering the *Particulars* of it; and so they do by their *Duty*, as Men do with bitter *Pills*, which they can swallow *whole*, but when they come to *chew*, those prove so distasteful, that presently they spit them out again. When therefore, you have calmly *considered* with yourselves all the *Arguments* against your Sins, and all the *Difficulties* of forsaking them, and you have *reasoned* your Wills into an *express Consent* to part with them for ever: Then betake yourselves to your bended Knees, and, in the most solemn Manner devote yourselves unto God;

God: O Lord, I acknowledge I have been a great Offender against thee; and that my past Life has been nothing else but a continued Rebellion; but now I see my Folly, and am ashamed to think what a notorious Offender I have been; wherefore here I solemnly promise in thy dreadful Presence, and in the Presence of all thy holy Angels, that wherever I have done amiss, I will do so no more; be Witness, O thou Righteous Judge of the World, that here I shake Hands with all my darling Lusts, and bid them adieu for ever: Wherefore be gone ye Soul-destroying Vipers, that have twined so long about me; away, ye wretched Idols, whom I have too long adored; for in the Name of God I am fully resolved never to entertain you more. And now, having reduced ourselves to a good Resolution of Mind, our greatest Difficulty is over: For so long as we keep our Resolution, we are invincible, and all the Powers of Hell will not be able to prevail against us. For our Wills are not to be forced by any Power whatsoever; and there is no Temptation in the World can make us return to our Sin, so long as we are heartily resolved against it: So that all we have now to do is to keep the Ground we have gotten, and not to suffer our Spiritual Enemies to batter down those good Resolutions we have raised against them, which if we can but maintain, will infallibly secure us, against all their Power and Malice.

IV. Another Instrument of Mortification is a wise and prudent Discipline. When by Consideration we have brought ourselves to a thorough Resolution of Amendment, then to confirm and secure our Resolution, there are sundry wise and prudent Methods to be used: As First, a frequent Repetition and Renewal
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of it. For at first our *vicious Inclinations* will muster up all their Strength against our *Resolution*; and a *perpetual Contest* there will be between them, till either the one or the other is *subdued*: But our good *Resolution* being yet but *raw and infirm*, will ever and anon be apt to *flinch and retreat*; so that unless we often *renew and reinforce* it, it will not long be able to withstand the Assaults and Importunities of our *vicious Inclinations*. Wherefore if we mean to be *successful* in this Work of *Mortification*, it will be necessary, for some Time at least, till the Strength of our *bad Inclinations* is broken, that we should every Morning, before we go abroad into the World, *renew* our *Vows* and *Resolutions* of Obedience, and *reinforce* them with a *serious Consideration* of those great Arguments whereupon they were first founded; that we should go out of our Chambers *armed* as Men that wait for their Enemies, and not *trust* our own Souls among the *Temptations* of the World, till we have first *chained* up our Inclinations with *new Vows* of Fidelity. Let us therefore every Day, as soon as we open our Eyes, thus resolve with ourselves; *I am now going into a World of Temptations, where I shall be solicited, both from within and without, to falsify my Vows which I have made to my God, and to betray my own Soul into everlasting Perdition: wherefore I do here in the dreadful Presence of God, and of my Saviour, and of all the heavenly Host, renew and ratify again the good Resolutions I have made, without any Reservation or Exception; and whatsoever Invitations I may have to the contrary, I will never revoke this Promise which I now make, or any part of it: So help me, O my God.* And, if for a while we would but *use* ourselves to this *Method*, I doubt not
but

but we should quickly find our good *Resolutions* so *strengthened* and *confirmed*, that the Gates of Hell would not be able to *prevail* against them: But if when we have made a *Resolution* against our Sins, we do not take Care to *confirm* and *renew* it, we shall find the *Strength* of it will, by Degrees, so *decay* and *abate*, that at last it will be *foiled* and *baffled* by every Temptation that encounters it. This, therefore, is *one* Part of that wise and prudent *Discipline* we are to exercise over ourselves, when we are thoroughly resolved against our Sin, frequently to *renew* our Resolution.

Secondly, Another Part of it, is frequent *Reflection* upon, and *Examination* of ourselves. And, indeed, if we do not *inure* ourselves to *this*, we shall very often sin *unawares* without either *considering* what we are *doing*, or *reflecting* upon what we have *done*: and while we can thus sin without *Check* or *Controul*, it will be in *vain* for us to make *Resolutions* of Obedience. For, still the *Pleasure* of *one* Act will invite us to *another*, and so in the Hurry of our worldly Occasions, we shall go on to *repeat* Sin after Sin, without *beeding* what we do, or *repenting* of what we have done: And, if we suffer *one* Sin to break through the Fence, that will open a Gap for *others* to follow; and, if *these* are not presently *stopped* by serious *Reflection*, they will make the Breach yet wider for *others*; till at last they have trodden down all the *Enclosures* of our Resolution, and laid open our whole Souls into a *Common*, and *Thorough-fare* of Iniquity. But now, by *inuring* ourselves to a frequent *Reflection* upon and *Examination* of our own Actions, we shall, in a great Measure, prevent those many *Surprizes* which otherwise will be

be unavoidable to us: And, when at any Time we stumble at unawares, the *Penance* we shall undergo in reflecting upon our Fault will so *embitter* the *Pleasure* of it, as to render it incapable of seducing us again. Wherefore, to secure the *Mortification* of our Sins, as it is necessary that every Morning we should *renew* our Resolution against it, so it is no less requisite that every Night (especially till we have made some considerable Progress) we should seriously examine our *Performances*, whether they have comported with our *Resolutions*; and, if upon an *impartial* Survey of our own Actions we find that they *have*, let us lie down in Peace, blessing and adoring that *Grace* by which we have been preserved. But, if we are conscious to ourselves of any *Breach* that we have made upon our *Morning Vows* of Obedience, let us bitterly bewail our own *Folly* and *Baseness*, and reflect upon it with the greatest Shame and Indignation: *What have I done, O wretched Traitor that I am, both to God and my own Soul?* *I have mocked the great Majesty of Heaven, with solemn Vows of Obedience, and broke the most sacred Ties to come at those Lusts which will be my Ruin: What can I plead for myself. Base and unworthy that I am! With what Face can I go into his dreadful Presence, whom I so lately invoked to be Witness to those Vows which I have this Day falsified?* Yet go I will, though I am all ashamed and confounded, and confess and bewail mine *Iniquity* before him. And, if we would but keep ourselves a while to this strict *Discipline*, we cannot imagine how mightily it would contribute to the *Mortification* of our Lusts: It would make our Reason so *vigilant*, and our Conscience so *tender*, that
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in a little while we should be startled with every *Appearance of Evil*: And *Death* itself would not be so terrible, as *Sin* to us; the *Pleasure* of our *Sin* would be so allayed and abated by those *stinging Reflections* that would follow upon it, that it would be no longer capable of *alluring* and *seducing* us; and the Dread of that bitter *Penance*, which we must undergo at Night, would sufficiently secure us against the *Temptations* of the Day.

Thirdly and *Lastly*, Another Part of that prudent *Discipline* which we are to exercise upon ourselves, is to keep ourselves at as great a *Distance* from *Sin*, as *prudently* and *conveniently* we can. He that will *mortify* his *Sin*, must at first not only *abstain* from *sinning*, but also, from every thing that doth nearly *approach* and *border* upon it: As for Instance, it is not sufficient to *mortify* an intemperate *Appetite*, that we abstain from *Drunkenness* and *Gluttony*; but besides this, we must, for a while at least, be very *abstemious*, till we have *reduced* our *Appetite* from its wild *Exorbitances*, and not *indulge* to ourselves the utmost *Liberties* of *lawful* Eating and Drinking; it is not sufficient for the *subduing* our wanton *Inclinations*, that we abstain from *Adultery* and *Fornication*; but we must also forbear those *Meats* and *Drinks*, those *Gestures* and *Societies*, those *Sights* and *Sports* which are apt to administer *Fuel* to our *immodest Flames*: To *tame* our malicious and revengeful *Passions*, it is not enough that we abstain from all *unjust Retaliations* of Injuries; but we must, moreover, restrain ourselves even from that *lawful* Displeasure and *just* Resentment which may safely be allowed to a meek and charitable Disposition. And, under these strict

Restraints

Restraint we must keep ourselves for a while, until we have worn off our evil *Inclinations*, by *habituating* ourselves to the contrary *Virtues*: And then we may safely *unloose* our Bands, and return again to our *lawful* Freedoms. But if, while we are *strongly inclined* to any Sin, we will venture as *near* to it as *lawfully* we may, it is a mighty *Hazard* but our *Inclination* will carry us a great Deal *farther* than we should go. For generally the Transition out of the *utmost* of what is *lawful* into the *nearest* of what is *sinful*, is undiscernible; the *μετρὸν*, or *Line* that metes out a *Virtue* from its neighbouring *Vice* being commonly so *small*, that it is hard to *distinguish* where they part, or to find out the just *Boundary* whereto we may go and *no farther*: So that when we think we are only upon the *Extremities* of what is *lawful*, we are many Times passed the *Line*, and are far gone within the *Borders* of what is *sinful*. So that unless we had an *infallible Guide* to accompany us in all our Actions and Circumstances, and to point out to us the particular *Limits* of *lawful* and *unlawful*; it is impossible we should be safe within the *Neighbourhood* of Evil: But, like those who dwell upon the *Confines* of two hostile Countries, we shall still lie open to *Invasion* on every Side. For our bad Inclinations are never so *impatient* of *Restraint*, as when they are within *Prospect* of *Satisfaction*, and the Objects which attract them are *near* and *easy* to be enjoyed: Now they will *struggle* with all their *Might* against our Resolution, and taking a *new Scent* of those beloved Lusts whose alluring Relishes they had almost forgotten, with all the Ties of *Conscience* we shall hardly be *able* to withhold them from following

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the *beloved Game*. So, that unless we keep ourselves at a convenient *Distance* from *Sin*, our bad *Inclinations* will be always within *View* of *Temptation*; which the *nearer* it is, the more it will *court* and *importune* them: And while we keep *near* our *Sin*, and do not enjoy it, we do but *tantalize* ourselves, and *enrage* our own Hunger by seeing a *Bait* before us which we *dare* not swallow. If ever, therefore, we mean to *mortify* our *Lusts*, we must not only avoid *coming* at them, but, so far as we can, *approaching* towards them; at least, till we have so *weaned* our Inclination from them, that their *Nearness* ceases to be a *Temptation* to us. These are the Parts of that wise and prudent *Discipline*, which we are to exercise upon ourselves, as a *Mean* and *Instrument* to *mortify* our *Lust*.

V. Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is frequent receiving of the *Sacrament*. And, indeed, I do not know any one more effectual *Cause*, or more fatal *Symptom* of the *Decay* of *Christian Piety* among us, than is the common and woeful Neglect of this *solemn Ordinance*, which, were it but *frequented* with that *wise* and *due* Preparation that it ought to be, would, doubtless, be highly *instrumental* to *reform* the *World*, and to make Men *good* in good Earnest. For, besides, that those sacred Elements are by *God's Institution* become *moral* Conveyances of the *Divine Grace*, whereby our good Resolutions are *nourished* and *confirmed*; there we have represented openly to our *Senses* one of the greatest Arguments against *Sin* in all our Religion, *viz.* the *Passion* and *Sacrifice* of our blessed Saviour; there he is represented to my Eyes in all his *Wounds* and *Agonies*, bruised and broken for

for my Sin, and bleeding to expiate my Transgressions. And, O my obdurate Soul, canst thou behold this tragical Spectacle, without Indignation against thy Sins which were the Cause of it? Does not thy Heart rise against thy Sins, whilst thou here beholdest him weltering in his Blood, and bearest those gaping Wounds it issues from proclaiming them his Assassins and Murderers? But, if thou hast not Ingenuity enough to prompt thee to revenge thy Saviour's Quarrel upon these mortal Enemies, yet, methinks, Self-Love would move thee not to be fond of thy Sins, when thou here beholdest how much the Son of God endured to expiate them. For how canst thou think of sinning without Trembling and Astonishment, who hast here before thine Eyes such a dreadful Example of God's Severity against it? Does it not strike thy Soul into an Agony to behold this bloody Tragedy, wherein the All-merciful Father is represented so inexorably incensed against thy Sins, that he that was the most innocent Person that ever was upon Earth, and also the greatest Favourite that ever was in Heaven, could not with all his Prayers and Tears obtain thy Pardon, without undergoing for thee the bitter Agonies of a woe-ful Death? Sure, if thou hast any one Spark of Love in thee, either towards thy Saviour, or thyself, this solemn Commemoration of his Passion cannot but affect thee with Horror and Indignation against thy Sins. But then, as in this great Solemnity we do commemorate our Saviour's Passion, so we do also renew the Vows of our Obedience to him; which (as I have shewed you) is very instrumental in itself to the subduing of our Sins; but much more, when it is done in so sacred a Manner. For as Feasting upon Sacrifices was always used as a federate Rite,

both among the *Jews* and *Heathens*, whereby God and Men by *eating* together, did *mutually* oblige themselves to one another; so the *Lord's Supper* being a Feast upon the Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood, when we come thither, we *eat* and *drink* of his Sacrifice, and do thereby *devote* ourselves in the most solemn Manner to his Service: We swear *Alliance* to him upon his own Body and Blood, and take the *Sacrament* upon it, that we will be his *faithful* *Votaries*. When we take the consecrated Symbols into our Hands, we make this solemn *Dedication* of ourselves to God; *Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively Sacrifice unto thee, and here we call to witness this sacred Blood that redeemed us, and those vocal Wounds that interceded for us, that from henceforth we oblige ourselves never to start from thy Service, what Difficulties soever we may encounter in it, and what Temptations soever we may have to forsake it.* Now, what can be a greater *Restraint* to us, when we are solicited to any Evil, than such a *solemn* and *sacred* Obligation? Methinks, the Sense of that *dreadful Vow* that is upon us, should so over-awe us, that we should not be able to *think* of *sinning* without Horror: *For, Lord! how shall I dare to cheat and defraud my Neighbour, when it was but the other Day that I vowed to be honest; and took the Sacrament upon it! With what Conscience can I now hate or design Revenge against my Brother, when I so lately swore unto God, upon the Body and Blood of my Saviour, that I would love and forgive all the World!* Surely, if Men had any Sense of God, any Dram of Religion in them, they would not be able, after such *Engagements*, to look upon any Temptation to sin without *Trembling*:

And whatsoever Pretences of *Unworthiness* Men may make to keep themselves from this *Ordinance*, I doubt not but the great *Reason* of their Neglect is this, that they love their *Lusts*, and are resolved, whatsoever comes of it, they will not part with them; and so they will not *come* to the *Sacrament*, because they must be obliged to *renounce* their *Lusts* there, which they are extremely unwilling to do. And if this be their *Reason*, as I fear it is, they are *unworthy* indeed; the more Shame for them! but it is such an *Unworthiness* as is so far from *excusing* their Neglect, that it is a foul *Aggravation* of it: For he that will not *receive* the *Sacrament*, because he will not *renounce* his *Lusts*, makes *one* Sin the Reason of *another*, and so pleads that for his *Excuse*, which will be the Cause of his *Condemnation*. But if we are honestly resolved to *part* with all our Sins, and can but willingly *devote* them as Sacrifices to the *Altar*, we are sufficiently *prepared* for this great Solemnity, and shall be *welcome Guests* to the Table of our Lord: If we can *sincerely* pay our Vows at his Altar, we may *confidently* take the *Cup of Salvation*, and *call upon the Name of the Lord*. And having thus *chained* up our *Lusts* by the *Vows* of Obedience we have paid there, it will be hard for them to shake off such *mighty Fetters*, or ever to get loose again from so *strict* a *Confinement*; especially if we take Care to *repeat* this our *sacramental Vow* as often as conveniently we can. For (as I have already shewed you) the *frequent Renewal* of our holy Vows and Resolutions does mightily tend to *strengthen* and *reinforce* them: And, therefore, it is worth observing, how much Care *Christ* hath taken in the very *Constitution* of his Religion, to oblige us to

a constant *Repetition* of our Vows and good Purposes. For, at our first *Entrance* into Covenant with him, we are to be *baptized*; in which Solemnity we do *renounce* the Devil and all his Works, and religiously *devote* ourselves to his Service: But, because we are apt to *forget* our Vows, and the Matter of it is *continually* to be performed, and more than one World doth depend upon it; therefore, he hath thought fit not to trust to our first *Engagement*, but so to methodize our Religion that we should ever and anon be obliged to give him *new Security*. For which End he hath instituted this *other Sacrament*, which is not like that of *Baptism*, to be received by us once for all, but is to be often *repeated*; that so at every *Return* of it we might be obliged again to *renew* our old Vows of Obedience: And doubtless, would we but follow this good Design of our *Saviour*, we should be far more successful in our *Religion* than we are. For, till we come to a *confirmed* State of Goodness, our holy Fervour will be very apt to *cool*, our good Purposes to *slacken* and *unwind*, and our virtuous Endeavours to *languish* and grow *weary*: So that, unless we *revive* our Religion by frequent *Restoratives*, in a little Time it will *faint*, and die away. Wherefore, to keep it *alive*, it is very necessary that we should come to our great Master's Table every Time we are invited by the solemn Returns of this *holy Festival*; that here we may *renew* our Vows, and *reinvigorate* our Resolutions, and *repair* our Decays, and put our sluggish Graces into a *new Fermentation*: And, if we would thus *frequently* communicate with a due *Preparation* of Mind, we should, doubtless, at every Sacrament acquire *new Life and Vigour*, and our good

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Resolutions would every Day get Ground of our *bad Inclinations*, till at last they had totally *subdued* them.

VI. And *Lastly*, Another *Instrument* of *Mortification* is *constant Prayer*. For, besides, that by our *sincere* and *honest Prayers* we are sure to obtain *Strength* and *Assistance* from God to enable us to vanquish and subdue our Lusts, he having *promised* to give his Holy Spirit unto every one that *asks* it: Besides this, I say, by a *constant* and *serious Devotion* our Hearts will be filled with such an *over-awing Sense* of God, that in all our Actions we shall *dread* and *revere* his Authority, and be ready to *tremble* at every Thought of offending him. For, there is nothing gives us such a *quick Sense* of God, as *Prayer*; that being the most *immediate Address* that we can make to him, and the *highest Elevation* of our Souls towards him. For we are a Sort of Beings that are a-kin to *two Worlds*, being placed in the Middle between *Heaven* and *Earth*, as the common *Center* wherein these distant Regions meet. By our *superior* Faculties we hold *Communion* with the *spiritual* World, and by our *inferior* with the *corporeal* one. But to this *sensible* or *corporeal* World we lie *open* and *bare*, all its Objects being *present* to us, and striking *immediately* on our Senses; whereas between us and the *spiritual* World there is a *Cloud* of *sensible* Things, which *interrupts* our Prospect of that clear Heaven above them; so that before we can perceive that which is *Divine* we must remove *this World* out of the Way, and withdraw our Souls from those *Thoughts* and *Desires* wherein these *lower* Things have entangled them; that so we may lie open to the *heavenly* Light, and our *cold* Affections may be immediately exposed to

the *enlivening Warmths* of the *Sun of Righteousness*. And hence arises the Necessity of holy *Meditations* and devout *Prayers*; the one being necessary to *abstract* our Minds from the Objects of *corporeal* Sense, and the other to *inspire* our Wills with *divine* Affections and Inclinations: For *Meditation* furnishes our *Understanding* with noble Thoughts and heavenly Ideas; and Prayer carries out our *Wills* to the Love of them, and joins our *Affections* fast to them; so that by the *one* we are tied in our *Minds*, and by the *other* in our *Choice* of the better World. For *Prayer* does naturally *sublimate* our gross and earthly *Passions*; and by keeping our Minds intent upon *God*, it wings our Affections towards *him*, and animates them with *Divine* Fires: And we do never rise from our Knees after a *devout* Address unto *God*, without deriving a *magnetick* Virtue from him, and being *sensibly* touched with his *Charms* and *Attractions*. So that if we did but inure ourselves to *servent* Prayer, those holy *Affections* which we should suck in with our *Devotions* would be instrumental to *extinguish* our vicious *Inclinations*; and we should go every Day from the Throne of Grace with such a *lively* Sense of *God*, and such a *vigorous* Relish of *Divine* Things, as would be sufficient to *antidote* us all the Day after against the Venom of any *single Contagion*. Wherefore, if we are in good earnest, and do *seriously* intend the *Mortification* of our Lusts, let us every Day before we go into the World be *seasoning* of our Minds with *holy Devotions*; and while we are *addressing* unto *God* in the deepest Sense of his unbounded *Perfections*, and of our own *Dependence* upon him, let us pour out our *Souls* before him, and make an hearty Oblation of our

Souls

Souls and Bodies to him. Let us offer up our *Wills* to him *broken and contrite*, that he may put them into what *Form and Posture* he pleases; shew him an Heart that quits all Interest in *itself*, and that would be only led and conducted by *him*; tell him that you are sensible, that to *mortify* your Lusts is far more difficult than to *resolve* to do it; and beseech him to *enable* you to be valiant in your *Actions*, as through his Grace you are already in your *Minds and Hearts*; that you may with as much *Certainty*, if not with as much *Ease*, do and *effect*, as you have *projected and resolved*. And having thus implored *his Aid*, and sincerely offered up yourselves unto *him*, you have laid a strong *Engagement* upon him not to abandon you: For to be sure, he will not *throw away* a Heart, that puts itself thus *humbly* into his Hands; nor suffer the *Devil* to make a *Prey* of that which hath been so affectionately *devoted* to him. For it was by the Concurrence of his Grace, with our own *Faculties*, that this Resolution of *Submission* to him was *begotten* in us; and can we think that the *Father of Love* will ever *abandon* his own *Off-spring*, while it *cries out* to him, and with pitiful and bemoaning Looks *implores* his Aid and Compassion? Surely this cannot chuse but *move* his *Fatherly Bowels*, and make them *yearn and turn* towards it, and by a strong Sympathy draw his *compassionate Arm* to aid and *relieve* it. Let us, therefore, but faithfully use our own *Endeavours*, and fervently implore *God's Grace*; and then to be sure he will never suffer that *Divine Fire*, which he hath *kindled* within us, to be *over-born* by our *Corruptions*; but will kindly cherish it with his own *Influence*,
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and touched with an out-stretched *Ray* from Himself, till it hath burned through all that Rubbish that oppresses it, and until it rises into a *viclorious Flame*.

C H A P. III.

Of some Motives to Mortification, taken from the Mischiefs of Sin.

HAVING shewn you at large what are the proper *Instruments of Mortification*, I shall in the next Place proceed to press you with some prevailing *Motives and Arguments* faithfully to employ and use them. And here I shall not insist upon those *Arguments* which arise from the Consideration of the *future State*, because *these* will fall in hereafter, when I come to discourse upon *it*: All the *Arguments* that I shall here urge, therefore, to press you to *mortify* your Sins, shall be drawn from the Consideration of those *present Miseries and Inconveniencies* which they bring you into. And these I shall rank under two general Heads:

First, Such as are *outward and bodily*.

Secondly, Such as are *inward and spiritual*.

I. The *outward and bodily Inconveniencies* which our Sins bring upon us are chiefly these Four:

First, They destroy our *Health*, and shorten our *Lives*.

Secondly, They stain our *Reputation*.

Thirdly, They waste our *Estates*.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, They disturb even our *sensual Pleasures* and *Delights*.

I. Consider how your Sins destroy your *Health* and shorten your *Lives*. And to convince you of this, I need do no more than only to lead you into the *Slaughter-houses* of Death, and to shew you how thick they are hung round about with the numerous *Trophies* of *Lust* and *Intemperance*: Behold! there lies an *Adulterer*, choaked with the stench of his own Rottenness; there a *Drunkard*, fettered with Gouts, and drowned in Catarrhs and Dropsies; there a *Glutton*, stifled with the Loads of his own undigested Meals; lo, there lie the dismembred Martyrs of *Revenge* and *Insolence*, that have lost their Limbs upon the Field in a foolish Quarrel for *Vanity* and *Mistresses*; and there the *Envoys* of *Rapine* and *Murder*, whose infamous Carcasses have furnished the *Scaffolds* and the *Gallows*. These, and such like woeful *Examples*, almost every Day's *Experience* presents to our View, which one would think were *sufficient* to warn Men of those *Vices*, which they so commonly find attended with such *tragical Effects*: And, indeed, there is no *Vice* whatsoever, but does, one Way or other, undermine our *Health*, and impair the *Strength* of Nature. For, all *Viciousness* consists in an *Excess* either of our *Passions*, or our *Appetites*: And it is plain and obvious, how destructive to our *Health* the wild *Excesses* of our *Appetites* are; how naturally *Wantonness* doth melt our Strength, consume our Spirits, and rot our Bones: How *Gluttony* obstructs our Breath, oppresses our Stomachs, and drowns our Bodies in *unwholesome Crudities*: how *Drunkenness* inflames our Livers, corrupts our Blood, dilutes our Brains, and converts us into walking

walking Hospitals of *Diseases*. And as for the *Excesses* of our *Passions*, it is no less apparent how much they *disturb* and *discompose* our Natures: Thus *Anger*, we see, fires the Spirits and inflames the Blood, and makes the Humours sharp and corroding: Thus *immoderate Sorrow* oppresses the Heart, dries the Bones, shrivels the Skin, and over-casts the Spirits with Clouds of *Melancholy*: Thus *Envy* swells the *Hypochondres*, which by drinking up the Nourishment of the neighbouring Parts, makes the whole Body *lean* and *meagre*: And in a word, thus *excessive Fear* stagnates the flowing Spirits, and turns the Blood into a *trembling Jelly*. And such *Disorders* as these, when they are frequent, must needs gradually *undermine* the Forts of Life, and hasten them into an *untimely Ruin*. Now is it not very strange, that those Men who are commonly so *over-tender* of their *Lives*, should be so *fond* of *Diseases*, and court their own *Executioners*? That they should chuse to swallow *Sicknesses*, to drink dead *Palsies*, and foaming *Epilepsies*, and to pass through so severe a Discipline of *Torments*, only to get an Habit of *destroying* themselves? 'Tis true, indeed, some there are that have been so *naturalized* to their *Vices*, that they cannot *live*, nor be well without them; that are *sick* while they are *temperate*, and are not able to sleep but in a Sea of Liquor, and are fain to put themselves into *Excesses* of *Passion* to *ferment* their Blood, and *rouse* their drowsy Spirits: But then it is to be considered, that generally they bring themselves to this sad Pass by their own evil *Habits* and *Customs*, which they acquire, by doing great *Violence* to themselves, and committing forcible *Outrages* on their own Natures. There is no *unseasonable Passion*, or
Appetite

Appetite can be necessary to our *Health*, or *Ease*, till we are first *habituated* to them: And before we can be *habituated*, we must undergo a tedious *Course* of Pain and Uneasiness; many a Fit of *tormenting Rage* must be endured, many an uneasy Draught, and sickly Qualm, and fainting Sweat must be undergone, before *Wrath* and *Intemperance* can be made *easy* and *pleasant* to us; and much more before they become necessary Remedies: And it is rare if ever we have Need of these Excesses, till by a long *Course* of Violence upon ourselves we have first over-turned our natural *Temper* and *Constitution*. And what Man in his Wits would ever swallow *Poison*, merely to *force* his Nature into a *Reconciliation* with it; when he is sure beforehand, that if he doth not *die* in the *Experiment* (as it is a great Chance but he doth) yet, that he must undergo many a *Sickness* and bitter *Agony*, before his Nature is so *accustomed* to it as to be *preserved* and *nourished* by it? But alas! by that Time we are arrived to that Pitch of *Intemperance* as to be drunk without the Penance of a *Surfeit* or a *Fever*, the Heat and Vigour of our Nature is usually so *quenched* with crude Humours, our Spirits so *drowned* in Rheums and Dropsies, and our Brains so *drenched* in Clouds of unwholesome Moisture, that all our Life after we are but so many *walking Statues* of Earth and Phlegm; and having washed away all the Principles of *Reason* and *Discretion* in us, we grow old in *Folly* and *Sottishness*, and at the last die *Changelings*. Thus Sin, you see, is a *Disease* to the *Body*; it wastes our *Strength*, and either makes the *Candle* of our Life to burn *dim*, or *blazes* it out into an untimely Period. Why then should we not be as earnest in the

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Cure of *this*, as we are of our *other Diseases*? For, doubtless, would we but as carefully apply the Means and Instruments of *Mortification*, as we do, when we are sick of a Fever or an Ague, the proper Remedies against them; we should quickly cure those *Excesses* of our Passions and Appetites, which do so *disease* our Bodies and *disturb* our Natures.

II. Consider how your Sins do stain and blemish your *Reputation*. For there is nothing in the whole World more *natural* to Men, than to *admire* Virtue and *disesteem* Vice wheresoever they find it: This we seem to do by a *natural Instinct*, antecedently to all our *Reasoning* and *Discourse*; and it is no more in our *Power* not to do it, than it is to chuse whether our Pulse shall beat, or our Blood circulate. For that Virtue is an *Ornament*, and Vice a *Deformity* to human Nature, is a Proposition so *self-evident*, that at the first Proposal it commands the Assent of all *Rational Beings*; nor is it in any Man's Power so far to offer *Violence* to his own Faculties, as to believe Vice *Praise-worthy*, or *commendable*, any more than it is to believe *that* to be *white* and *strait*, which he sees to be *black* and *crooked*: And accordingly you will find, that by all Mankind it hath ever been branded with an *infamous* Character, and looked on as a *Disparagement* to the noblest Accomplishments. For, in all the Monuments of former Ages, never were any Man's *Lusts* and *Intemperances* recorded among the Titles of his *Honour*; nor was there ever any one canonized in the Records of *Fame* for being a *Villain* or a great *Debauchee*. But generally they are the *Wise* or the *Valiant*, the *Just* or the *Merciful*, the *Chaste* or the *Liberal*, whose Names have been *consecrated* in History; and no
Man

Man ever acquired a glorious Memory, but it was either by being *virtuous*, or by *seeming* to be so. And, though wicked Men, like Glow-worms, do sometimes shine in the Dark, where either their Vice is not *seen*, or is *mistaken* for Virtue; yet usually at the Approach either of *Time* or *Light*, their *Lustre* vanishes and goes out in *Stink* and *Dishonour*. So that, methinks, had we any Regard to our own *Reputation*, we should *scorn* to harbour those *infamous Lusts*, which in the Opinion of all the World are so great *Disparagements* to us: For what a monstrous *Shame* is it to be despised by all *wise* Men, to be hooted at by *Boys*, to be talked of in Fairs and Markets, and pointed at and described by Appellatives of *Scorn*? And yet, all this we expose ourselves to for the Sake of a few *base Lusts*, which cause us to *rot* above Ground and to *stink* alive, and when we are dead will strew our Graves with *Dishonour*, and inroll our Names in the black Records of *Infamy*.

III. Consider how your Vices do waste and consume your *Estates*. For generally it is a very *chargeable* thing to be *wicked*, there being few *Lusts* but do require a large *Revenue* to maintain them: For, what a vast *Expence* is the *Epicure* at to provide Meat and Drink-Offerings for that Idol-God his *Belly*? What an inestimable *Charge* is it to the prodigal, *ostentatious Fool*, to gratify all his Vanities, and plume the Wings of his *fantastic Pride*? How much does it cost the *insatiate Wanton* to make Provision for his unbounded *Sensuality*? How many a fair Estate hath there been spent in *litigious Suits* at Law, merely to improve a Quarrel, and gratify a silly *Revenge*? And how many a prosperous Trader hath
under-

undermined himself by his own *Fraud* and *Knavery*, whilst for a present *dishonest Gain* he loses a Customer, by whom he might have honestly gotten ten Times more in seven Years Trade and Commerce? And indeed, for the Generality, there is a World of *ill Husbandry* in being *wicked*; most of our *Lusts* being like the Holes of a *Sieve*, through which our Estate runs out as fast as we can pour it in: And, I believe it were easy to demonstrate, that the *Ruin* of most Families, and the *Beggary* of most Persons, is owing to one Vice or other; and, that where one is sunk by mere *Misfortune*, there are twenty ruined by their own *Wickedness*. Now, what Man in his Wits would keep such a Company of *devouring Lusts* about him, that are perpetually spunging upon his *Estate*, and eating the Bread out of his *Children's* Mouths? Who would ever expose *himself* and his *Family* to the Hazard of *Want* and *Beggary*, merely to gratify an unreasonable *Passion*, or to satiate a wild and intemperate *Appetite*? But, perhaps, you think that there is no great Danger of this; for whatever comes of it, you will take Care of the *main Chance*, and be such *good Husbands* in your *Wickedness*, as to be sure not to impair your Estates by it. Alas, poor Men! you know not what you will be; for, when once you are set into a *Course* of *Wickedness*, you are like so many eager *Gamesters*, that, when they set to it, resolve to lose but a *Crown*, or a *Piece* at most; - but when they have lost that, they double their Stakes in hope to recover all again, and so game on till they have *no more* to lose. And first, perhaps, your *Lusts* will be very *modest*, and content themselves with the cheapest Provisions you can make for them; but when once they have *inveigled* and

and *drawn* you in, they will still be craving more costly Entertainments, and will by *Degrees* so encroach upon you, that you know not when or where you shall stop: So that it is in vain for you to talk what you will do; for either you must *mortify* your Lusts, or resolve to *gratify* them; and, if you do the latter, there is no End of it: For, like the *Daughters of the Horseleeche*, they will still be crying *Give, Give*, till you have no more to give, and then they will prey upon *yourselves*.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, Consider how your *Vices* do disturb and interrupt even your *sensual Pleasures* and *Delights*. For, how often do you embroil the *Peace* of your Families by your own *peevish Passions*, and disturb the whole *Neighbourhood*, with whom you might enjoy the *Pleasures* of a *friendly Conversation*? How many *Enemies* do you create yourselves by your own *Malice* and *Ill-Nature*, whom you might as easily oblige by *Kindness* and *Good-Will*, at least to a *fair Correspondence*, if not to a *Return* of *mutual Endearments*: To how many *Hazards* and *Difficulties*, *Jealousies* and *Disappointments*, *Impatiencies* of Desire, and *Fears* of Discovery does *Lasciviousness* expose you? When as, would you but *confine* your *vagrant Lusts* within the holy Circles of *Conjugal Chastity*, you might entertain your Appetites with *Innocence* and *Ease*, with *equal Pleasure* and *less Difficulty*, with a *pure Conscience*, and without the Hazard either of *Disappointment* or *Discovery*. How do you *perplex* and *entangle* yourselves by *Lying* and *Knavery*, consuming the *Pleasure* of your Lives within a winding Maze of little *Tricks* and intricate *Contrivances*? And what *shameful Retreats*, and false Colours and Daubings are you fain to use to avoid *Contradiction*

and *Discovery*? Whereas were you but honest and *sincere* in your Professions and Actions, your Way would be *open*, and *easy* and *uniform*; where you might pursue all your Ends by the *directest Means*, and need never wander about in the *Labyrinth* of a *mysterious Subtilty*; where you may talk without *Blushing* in the Sight of the Sun, and the View of the World, and have no Occasion to *skulk* into *Coverts* and *Retirements*. Once more. What *miserable* Drudges doth *Covetousness* make of us? It will not let us *rest* Day nor Night, but sends us about in *everlasting Errands*; now to be *scorched* in the Southern, anon to be *frozen* in the Northern Parts of the World; this Day it exposeth us to be *shipwrecked* at Sea, the next to be *terrified* on Shore; and, all this to get a *great Heap* of Wealth, which when we have gotten, it will not let us *enjoy*: So that when we *have* what we so *impatiently* hungred after, we have only acquired a *greater Necessity*; because before we *needed* only what we had *not*, but now we *need* what we *have* too; our *covetous Desires* luring us off, and not enduring we should *feed* upon our own *Quarry*: And so after all our *Toil*, we shall *need* as much at least as we did *before*; only before we did not *possess* what we *needed*, whereas now we shall *need* what we do *possess*. But did we take the Pains to learn that great Lesson of *Christian Contentment*, we should then pursue the World with far *less Vehemence*, and enjoy it with far *more Freedom*: We should be *industrious* without that eager *Solicitude*, and if it pleased God to bless our Industry, we should neither *waste* what we have, nor *want* it; and many a happy Year we should *enjoy* that, which now we consume in vexatious Care to *keep*, and restless

Desire

Desire to *encrease* it. How *unpleasant* is the Life of the *intemperate Epicure*, who lives in a continual *Lethargy*, and dozes away his Time in *Sottishness* and *Stupidity*; and by perpetually sucking in *Rheums* and *Defluxions*, doth so *weaken* and *dilute* the Vigour of the Organs of Sense, that he *perceives* not the Briskness of his own *Relishes*; but after his delicious Gob-bets are past his Throat, they *load* and *oppress* him, and his *Stomach* is fain to do Penance for the Folly and Extravagance of his *Palate*; and those deep Draughts wherein he seeks to drown his *Conscience* and his *Melancholy*, leave behind them such an *Uneasiness* both in his *Body* and *Mind*, as nothing can relieve? For, as soon as he hath *slept* away the Fumes of his *Intemperance*, he finds himself *sick* as well of *Company* as of *Solitude*, and is fain to endure all the four Regrets, both of his *Conscience* and his *Stomach*. Whereas, would but this Man *govern* his Appetite by the Laws of *Temperance*; would he eat to *satisfy*, and not to *invite* his Hunger, and drink to *refresh*, and not to *force* and *oppress* himself; his Relish would be *quick* and *vigorous*, his Gust *sincere*, and his Digestion *easy*; and his Appetite, being not *overloaded* with the foregoing Meal, would quickly *return* again, and give a *pleasing Relish* to his next Morfel: When he rose from his Table, his Nature would not be *burdened*, but *refreshed* and *recreated*; his *Eyes* would not swim in *Floods* of Rheum, nor his *Brains* in *Seas* of Liquor; his *Face* would not be fired with the *unwholesome Inflammations* of his Liver, nor his *Reason* overcast with the *Clouds* and *Vapours* of his gorged Stomach; but, after his *frugal* Meals, he would still find his Organs *fresh* and *vigorous*; and, when he went to Bed, his *Sleep* would

not be broken with so many *unquiet* Starts, nor *sickly* Qualms; nor, in the Morning would he awake in a *Fever*: But, all his Life would be *serene* and *calm*; and, he would enjoy all that is *pleasant* in *Luxury*, and be only barred from the apparent *Sting* of it. Many other Instances I might add, but these, I think, are sufficient to demonstrate, that *Vice* is the great *Disturber*, even of those *sensual* Pleasures and *Delights*, that it promises to us: So that it plainly *contradicts* its own Pretensions, and though it invites to *Pleasure*, yet entertains us with nothing but *Distraction* and *Uneasiness*. The Cup of *Fornication* which it holds out to us, though it is spiced at the *Top*, is Gall and Wormwood at the *Bottom*; and all those *Delights* that it courts us with, are only so many *painted Miseries*; which, though they may look amiable and inviting at a *Distance*, yet, upon a more *considerate* View, will be found to be most wretched *Cheats* and *Impositions*. So that, methinks, were we but *ingenious Epicures*, that *understood* the Pleasures of the Body, and the *true* Methods of *enjoying* them; we should for *their* Sakes discard those *Lusts*, that are so *contrary* and *destructive* to them; and it would be impossible for us not to *bate* our Sins, as not to *love* our Pleasures.

And thus you see, how many *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies* our *Lusts* bring upon us, in Respect of our *Bodies*, and *outward* Circumstances; so that, if we had no *immortal Spirit* to take Care of, no Interest beyond the *Grave* to look after; yet, methinks, had we but *Reason* enough to *understand*, and *Self-Love* enough to *pursue* our *present* Welfare, that were sufficient to oblige us to *mortify* our *Lusts*. For, so long as *they* live they will be *Plagues* to us, and we
must

must never expect a *quiet Possession* of our own *Happiness*, till we have utterly *destroyed* these *mutinous Disturbers* of it, that are as so many *Thorns* in our Eyes, and *Goads* in our Sides. But, alas! it is not our *bodily Happiness* only, that they interrupt and invade; but (which is more intolerable) they poison our *Souls* with their contagious Breath, and scatter *Plagues* and *Infection* over our *noblest Faculties*. Which brings me to the *second Sort* of Motives, to persuade you to *mortify* your Sin, *viz.* Those that are drawn from the present *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies* that it brings upon our *Souls*, which are chiefly these three.

First, It spoils our *Understandings*.

Secondly, It subverts the *natural Subordination* of our *Faculties*.

Thirdly, It disturbs the *Tranquillity* of our *Minds*.

I. Consider how much your Sins do *spoil* and *waste* your *Understandings*. For, Sin is an *Affront* to our *Understandings*, and a plain *Contradiction* to the Reason of our *Minds*; there being no *Vice* whatsoever, but what is founded in *Folly* and *Unreasonableness*. Whilst, therefore, we live in *Sin*, we do so far lay aside our *Reason* (which ought to be the Moderator of our Actions) and abandon ourselves to the Conduct of our own blind *Appetites* and head-strong *Passions*: Which will naturally *weaken* our *Rational Faculties*, and bring a lingering *Consumption* on our *Understandings*. For, as our *Powers* are improved and perfected by *Exercise*, so they are impaired and wasted by *Disuse* and *Inactivity*; and therefore, our *Reason* being such a *Power*, as is not naturally to be perfected but by *Action*, it necessarily follows, that the less *active* it is, the more *imperfect* it must be. Whilst, therefore, we

live in *Sin*, or (which is all one) in the *Neglect* of our Reason, we *consume* and *waste* our Rational *Faculties*; which being *unemployed* will naturally contract *Rust*, and grow every Day more *weak* and *restive*. For a Life of *Sin* is all transacted by *Sense* and *Passion*; Reason sits looking on, and having no Part in the brutish Scene, *melts* away in *Sloth* and *Idleness*: Its Vital Powers *freeze* for Want of *Motion*, and like standing Waters *stagnate*, and gather Mire till they *corrupt* and *putrify*. And, besides this *Decay* that *Sin* brings upon our *Understanding*, by taking us off from the *Exercise* of it, it is also injurious to those bodily *Organs*, by which our *Understanding* while we are in the *Flesh*, doth *reason* and *operate*. For our Body is, as it were, the *Musical Instrument*, upon which our Mind sets all its *Harmony*, and by which it runs all the curious Divisions of *Discourse*: And the Blood, and Spirits, and Brain, and other Parts of it are the *Strings* of this *Instrument*, upon the well-tuning of which depends all the *Musick* of *Reason*. But now there is scarce any *Sin*, that doth not, some Way or other, *indispose* our *Bodies* for the Use of our *Minds*, and render them *unfit*, especially for the most *perfect* Exercise of our *Reason*. Thus *Drunkenness* dilutes the Brain, which is the *Mint* of the *Understanding*, and *drowns* those Images which are stamped upon it in a *Deluge* of unwholesome *Moi- stures*. Thus *Gluttony* clogs the *Animal Spirits*, which are as it were the *Wings* of the Mind, and renders them *incapable* of performing the noblest and sublimest Flights of *Reason*. Thus *Anger* and *Wantonness* force up the boiling Blood into the Brain, and by that, *disorders* the Motions of the *Spirits* there, *confounds* the *Fantasms*, and *disturbs* the Conceptions,

Conceptions, and *shuffles* the Ideas of the Imagination into an Heap of *inarticulate* and *disorderly* Fancies. And, how is it possible our Minds should strike *true Harmony*, when its Instrument is thus *disordered*, and all the Strings of it are so *out of Tune*? How should we *understand* well, while our *Brams* are *overcast* with the thick Fumes of *sensual* Lusts; and those *Spirits*, which should wing our Minds, are grown so *listless* and *unactive*, that they rather *hamper* and *entangle* them? For, what Clearness is to the *Eye*, that Purity is to the *Mind*: As *Clearness* doth dispose the *Eye* to a quick and distinct Perception of *Material* Objects; so *Purity* from Lust and Passion disposes the *Mind* to a more clear Apprehension of *Intellectual* ones; and the more any Man's Soul is *cleansed* from the Filth and Dregs of *Sensuality*, the *brighter* it will be in its Conceptions, and the more *nimble* and *expedite* in its *Operations*. For *Purity* doth naturally fit the *Body* to the *Mind*; it puts its Organs all in *Tune*, and renders its *Spirits* *fine* and *agil*, and fit for the *noblest* Exercises of *Reason*: Which they can never be, whilst they are subject to disorderly *Passions*, and drenched in the unwholesome Reeks of *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*. But, besides this *Mischief* which Sin doth to our *Understandings*, by rendering our *Bodies* unapt to all *Intellectual* Purposes; it also dyes the *Mind* with *false* Colours, and fills it with *Prejudice* and *undue Apprehensions* of Things. For, while our Souls are under the Sway of any disorderly *Passion* or *Appetite*, they will naturally warp our *Judgments* into a Compliance with their own Interest; and bribe us to *judge* of Things, not according to what they *are*, but, according to what we would *have* them:

And when our *Judgments* are thus bribed by our *Interest*, and swayed by our *Passions*, it is impossible we should *judge truly* of Things. For our *Passions* will *discolour* the Objects of our Understandings, and *disguise* them into such Shapes as are most agreeable to our *Humour* and *Interest*; and, so our *Opinions* of Things will alter upon every Variation of our *Humours*, and our *Thoughts*, like *Weather-cocks*, will be wheeling about upon every *Change* of Wind. So that while we are encompassed with the Mists of *sinful Prejudice*, they will necessarily hinder the *Prospect* of our *Reason*, and obscure the *Brightness* of our Understandings, and the *Clearness* of our discerning *Faculties*. And thus you see, how natural it is to Vice, to *spoil* and *waste* our Understandings, and to choke up those Fountains of *Light* within us, with Clouds and Darknes. And, that it doth so, is very apparent in Fact; for, how much *wicked* Men have lost their *Reason*, is apparent by the *ridiculous Principles* upon which they generally act: which generally are so very *weak* and *absurd*, that it would be *impossible* for Men to assent to them, were not their Understandings *perished*, and the Reason of their Minds woefully *impaired* and *wasted*. As for Instance; the *desperate Atheist* wishes that there were no God, upon this Principle, that it is better for Men to be without a *God*, than to be without their *Lusts*; than which there can be nothing more *wild* or *extravagant*. For it is plain, that *without* our Lusts we can be *happier* than *with* them; whereas it is the *common Interest* of Mankind, that the World should be governed by infinite *Goodness*, conducted by infinite *Power* and *Wisdom*; and no Man, or Society of Men can be *happy* without it. For, take *God*
out

out of the World, and you take away all *Hope* from the Miserable, all *Comfort* from the Sorrowful, and all *Support* from the Dejected and Calamitous; and at one Blow cut in sunder all the Bands of *Society*, raze the Foundations of *Virtue*, and confound all Distinction between *Good* and *Evil*. And yet the besotted Wretch, for the Sake of a paltry *Lust* that betrays him with a Kiss, and stings him in the Enjoyment, would fain banish *God* out of the World; though it is apparent that in so doing he would do Mankind more *Mischief*, than if he should blow out all the *Lights* of Heaven, or pull down the *Sun* from the Firmament. And in the general, what more ridiculous Principles can there be thought, than such as these; That *Sense* is to be preferred before *Reason*, *Earth* before *Heaven*, *Moments* before *Eternity*; that the short-liv'd Pleasures of *Sin*, which expire in the Fruition, are sufficient to ballance the Loss of an immortal Heaven, and the Sense of an eternal Hell; that it is time enough to repent when we can sin no more; and that *God* is so fond a Being, as rather than ruin those that wilfully spurn at his Authority, and trample upon his Laws, he will accept a few Tears and Promises to live well, when we can live no longer, in Exchange for all the Duty we owe him; and that we may sit all the Day in the Lap of our Lusts, and enjoy them without Controul, and then at Night, when we can enjoy them no longer, fly up to Heaven, upon the Wings of a Lord have Mercy upon us. And yet, a wicked Life is either built upon no Principles at all, or upon such as these; which are ridiculous, beyond all the extravagant Conceits of *Fools*, or *Madmen*. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Scripture so frequently brands the *Sinner*, with the infamous Character of a Fool;

Fool; for, if you measure him by the Principles he acts upon, there is not a *greater Fool* in Nature: Which is a plain Evidence, how much *Vice* doth beset the Understandings of Men, and, like those barbarous *Philistines*, puts out their Eyes, only to sport itself with their *Follies* and *Extravagancies*. So that, methinks, had we any *Reverence* for our own *Reason*, by which we are constituted *Men* and distinguished from the *Beasts* that perish; we should never endure those *Lusts* within our Bosoms, that do so much *impair* and *waste* it.

II. Sin subverts the *natural* Subordination of our *Faculties*. For, the *natural* Order and Polity of our *Natures* consists in the Dominion of our *Rational* Faculties, over our sensitive Passions and Appetites; so that, then only we live according to the *Law* of our *Nature*, when we eat and drink, and love and hate, and fear and hope, and desire and delight, according as *right Reason* prescribes. For, the *noblest* Principle of Human Nature is *Reason*, by which it is, that we are constituted *Men*, and advanced into a *Form* of Beings above all *sublunary* Creatures; and this *Reason* of ours is implanted in us, by the great Author of our Beings, for no other End, but only to *steer* and *direct* us; to be an *Eye* to our blind and brutish *Affections*, to *correct* the Errors of our *Imaginations*, and bound the Extravagancies of our *Passions* and *Appetites*, and to *regulate* the whole Course of our *Actions*; so as that we may demean ourselves as becomes such *Beings* as we are, and placed in such *Relations* and *Circumstances*. God, therefore, having compounded us of contrary *Natures*, viz. *Rational* and *Sensual*, which are pregnant with contrary *Inclinations* and *Affections*;

Affections; from hence arises the *Necessity* of all those Heroick *Virtues*, which consist in the *Dominion* of our *Reason* over our sensitive *Affections* and *Appetites*; such as Chastity and Sobriety, Meekness and Equanimity, and the like; all which are proper to us as Beings, made up of contrary *Principles*, from whence spring those contrary *Inclinations*, in the good or bad *Government* whereof consists the Nature of *Virtue*, and *Vice*. Whilst, therefore, we keep our brutal *Passions*, and *Appetites*, in Subjection to our *Reason*, we follow the genuine Current of *Human Nature*; in which our *best* and *noblest* Principle *rules*, and all our *inferior* Powers are regularly *subordinate* to it: But, when we degenerate into a State of *Sin*, we thereby *discompose* the Harmony of our Natures, and put all our well-ranked Faculties into a strange *Disorder*, and *Confusion*. For, every Sin is a *Rebellion*, either of our *Passions*, or *Appetites*, against our *Reason*; and we never commit any known Evil, but, we wilfully *affront* our own *Understandings*, and offer open *Violence* to those *Superior* Faculties that should *rule* and *govern* us. So that, when by a *Custom* of *sinning*, our *Passions*, and *Appetites*, have been *trained* up for a while in *Disobedience* to our *Reason*, they will by Degrees, grow so *headstrong* and *ungovernable*, that it will be a hard Matter to restrain them within any Compass of *Reason* and *Sobriety*; and, unless we take a World of Pains to *suppress* them, they will never leave *rioting* and *tumultuating* within us, till they have broke through all their *natural* Confinements into a *licentious*, *wild*, and *boundless* Anarchy; and, having thus got Head within us, and beaten our *Reason* from its *native Throne*, they will hurry us headlong into all
Manner

Manner of *Follies* and *Extravagancies*. For, now we shall act no longer from *Reason*, but from *Sense*; our Nature being *turned* upside-down, and the Cardinal Points of our Motion *changed* into quite contrary Positions; so that our *Reason* will stand us in no other Stead, but only to cater for our *Flesh* and *sensitive Affections*, and to make us *Brutes* with greater *Luxury* and *Relish*: And being thus wholly acted by our *brutish Sense*, and led only by the *blind* Instincts of the *Flesh*, our *Reason* will have no Hand in the *Government* of our *Lives*; but, like the Beasts of the Field, we shall live at random, and do Things, not because they are *reasonable* in themselves, but because they are *pleasing* to our unreasonable *Affections*, and *Appetites*. Such a strange *Disorder* doth Sin bring upon our *Natures*; so miserable doth it *blend* and *confound* our Faculties, that were it not for our *Speech* and *Shape*, it would scarce leave us any remaining Character of *Distinction* from the *Beasts* that perish. For, it dissolves our *Reason* into a mere *sensual Sagacity*, and enslaves that *high-born* Power to every *base* Passion, and Appetite; and so reduces our *well-formed Natures* into an undistinguished *Chaos*, where Sense and Reason, Brute and Man, are *shuffled* together in a Heap of rude and undigested *Ruins*. So that, methinks, had we any Reverence for that *excellent Nature* that we carry about with us, that *Nature* by which we are allied to *Angels*, and do border upon *God* himself; we should never endure to harbour those *inhuman Lusts*, that do so *disorder* and *confound* it, that make such *Spoils* and *Devastations* within us, that do so disturb the *Harmony* of our Faculties, and disjoint the very *Frame* of our Beings.

III. Sin *disturbs* the Tranquillity of our *Minds*; and this naturally follows from the *former*: For, the *Mind* of Man can never be at *Ease*, so long as its *Bones* are out of Joint, and all its *Faculties* so woefully *disordered*. For, thus every Thing is at *Ease*, so long as it is in its own *natural* State, and Condition; but, when once its Parts are *displaced*, or put into a *Disorder*, or *distorted* into an unnatural Figure; it is in *restless* Motion, until it *returns* again to the specifick State and Posture of its own *Nature*. And, so it is with the *Mind* of Man; which, while it preserves its own *natural Station*, and *Superiority* over our Affections, and Appetites, is *calm*, and *quiet*, and *serene*, and enjoys within itself perpetual *Ease* and *Tranquillity*: But, being thrown out of its *native Throne*, and led into *Captivity* by its own *Vassals*, it can find no Rest in this *preternatural* State; but, like a disjointed Member, is in perpetual *Anguish* and *Anxiety*; and having, like all other Things, an inward *strong Propension* to its own *natural* State and Condition, it will be perpetually *struggling* and *contending* towards it, until it hath quite *wearied* and *tired* out itself with its own vain, and ineffectual Efforts; and then it will sit down, and bemoan itself, and pine away with *Grief* and *Dissatisfaction*. And hence it is, that in the Course of a *wicked Life* we feel such Contentions between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, such perpetual Broils between the Law in our *Minds*, and the Law in our *Members*; which proceeds from this *natural Struggling*, and *Conatus* of the *Mind* to recover its *native Empire* over our Affections and Appetites: From which it will never wholly surcease, until it is wholly *subdued* to the Will of the *Flesh*; and, when it is so, it will
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be perpetually *torn* and *distracted* by those *various*, *wild*, and *inconsistent* Affections, whereunto it will be subjected. For, so long as our *Passions* are subject to our *Reason*, there can be no *Division* among them; because nothing can *divide* our *Passions*, but only our proposing to ourselves *different* and *contrary* Ends: But, the Ends of *Reason* are all *consistent* with, and *subordinate* to one another, its *lesser* and *inferior* Ends being only the Inns at which it baits upon the Road towards its *superior* ones; and, whilst we are under the Power and Conduct of *one* Sovereign End, our *Passions* must necessarily *join* Hand in Hand, and walk together like Brethren in *Unity*. But, when once they have shaken off the Yoke of *Reason*, and submitted themselves to the Dominion of *Sense*; among that great *Variety* of Ends, and Objects, which *Sense* proposes to them, they must needs be *torn* and *divided* one from another. For, such is the *Scantiness* of *sensual* Goods, that we, not being able to *content* ourselves with any *one* of them, are fain to walk the Rounds in a constant Succession, and Circle of *Varieties*; and then every one of these *various* Goods will create within us a *various* *Desire*: And so, as *Sense* doth multiply its *Temptations*, we shall still multiply our *Desires*, and *Affections*; and at every *new* Game that springs, we shall still let fly *new* *Passions*. But, now the Ends of *Vice* are not only *various*, but also *contrary* to, and *inconsistent* with one another: For, all *Vices* consisting in Extremes, either in *Excesses* or *Defects*, their Ends must be *contrary* too, and so they cannot but disagree; *Excess* and *Defect* being in themselves *most* *contrary*. And, these *contrary* *Vices* must needs raise *contrary* *Factions* in the *Mind*, and people it with a Rabble of *wild*, and

inconsistent Passions; which will be always bandying one against another, and consequently embroiling the *Soul* in eternal *Mutinies* and *Tumults*. And this is the State of every *vicious* Man; he is divided into infinite *Schisms* and *Separations*; and like a *barbarous Country*, cantoned out into a World of petty Principalities, which are always together by the Ears, and continually invading one another's Dominions. Now, what a miserable *Distraction* must a Man's *Mind* be in, when it is thus *jostled* to and fro in such a Crowd of *contrary* and *impetuous* Passions; when *Pride* shoves it one Way, and *Covetousness* another; when *Ambition* thrusts it forward, and *Cowardice* pulls it back again; and so many *different Lusts* do at the same Time, hurry it so many *different* and *contrary Ways*? How is it possible it should escape *Ætæon's* Fate, to be worried till it is torn in Pieces by its own Hounds? And, therefore, as we value the *Peace* of our own *Minds*, and would not have the inward *Harmony* discomposed by the perpetual *Jarrings* of so many *contrary* Passions; it concerns us to *subdue* and *mortify* our *Lusts*: For, so long as we entertain these seditious *Incendiaries*, they will be perpetually raising *Tumults* within us, and our *Minds* will never be at *quiet* for them. For, the only Way to keep our *Minds* at Peace, is to *unite* our *Affections*; which we can never hope to do, until we have *subdued* them to the Empire of our *Reason*. But, when we come to be under the Command of that *one supreme* End, which our *Reason* will propose to us, as the *utmost Scope* of our *Desires*; then, and not till then, will these *scattered Rivulets* of our *Affections* *unite* themselves in *one* and the *same* Channel, and flow towards *one* and the *same* Ocean: And, then our
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Mind will be at *Rest*, and its *contrary Passions* being *laid*, which, now like the *boisterous Waves* dash one against another, it will no longer be *capable* of being *ruffled* into a *Storm*; but in the midst of all the *Changes* of this *World*, will find itself perpetually inspired with the most *calm* and *gentle* Thoughts.

C H A P. IV.

Of Helps to Mortification, given us by the Spirit of God.

THE *Motives* and *Arguments* for *Mortification*, which arise from considering the *Mischiefs* and *Inconveniencies* of *Sin*, having been spoken to; I shall now proceed to such *Helps* to this *Duty*, as are given us by the *Spirit of God*: And, I shall consider them under these *four* Heads,

First, The *external* Arguments and Motives of the *Gospel*.

Secondly, The *external* Providences of the *Divine Spirit*, by which he excites us to our *Duty*.

Thirdly, The *Aids* and *Assistances* which the *Holy Angels* give us, who are the *Agents*, and *Ministers* of the *Holy Ghost*.

Fourthly, The *internal* Motions and Operations of the *Holy Ghost* upon our *Souls*.

I. Let us consider the *external* Arguments and Motives of the *Gospel*; such as the *Promises* and *Threats* of it, the great *Example* of our *Saviour* described in it, together with all those mighty *Considerations*

rations out of his *Passion* and *Resurrection*, his *Intercession* for us at the Right-hand of God, and his *Coming* to judge the World in the *last Day*: All which are the Aids and Assistances of the *Holy Spirit*, who hath revealed them to us, and demonstrated their *Truth* and *Divinity* by sundry *miraculous* Operations; which are, therefore, called the *Evidences* and *Demonstrations* of the *Spirit*. So that whatsoever there is in the Gospel to enable us to our Duty; whatsoever Counter-Charms its *Promises* afford us against the Charms and Allurements of our own *Lusts*; whatsoever *Antidotes* its *Threatnings* prescribe us against the Terrors of the Devil's Temptations; whatsoever *Motives* there are in the *Life* or *Death*, *Resurrection* and *Intercession* of our Blessed Saviour, and in his final *Judgment*, by which we must stand or fall, for ever: In a word, whatsoever *Arguments* the Laws or the Creed of our *Holy Religion* offer us, either to *incite* us to our Duty, or to *enable* us to baffle the Temptations of *Vice*; they are all from the *Spirit*, and consequently are to be reckoned among those gracious Aids and Assistances which *He* affords us. And hence the Gospel, which teaches us to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly*, is called the *Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation unto all Men*, Tit. ii. 11, 12. and in Rom. viii. The Apostle calls it *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*, by which he was *made free from the Law of Sin and Death*: Nay, sometimes the Gospel is called the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 6. *Who also hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit*; i. e. Not of the Law, but of the Gospel, *for the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life*: That is,

as he elsewhere explains himself, the Law is a Ministration of *Death*, but the Gospel brings *Life* and *Immortality* to Light: And that this is the Meaning, is plain from what follows, ver. 7, 8. *But if the Ministration of Death, written and ingraven in Stones, was glorious, (which is a plain Description of the Law of Moses) how shall not the Ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?* And consonantly hereunto by the *Spirit* we may understand the Motives and Arguments of the Gospel.

2. Let us consider the *external* Providences of the *divine Spirit*, by which he excites us to our *Duty*, and doth many ways administer to our *Reformation*; which are so considerable a Part of God's *Grace* and *Assistance*, that there are very few *good Thoughts* and *Purposes* that spring up in our Minds, which have not their *Rise* from some *external* Event of *divine Providence*. And this we may easily observe, by following the *Train* of our own Thoughts, and pursuing the *Stream* of them to their *Spring* and *Original*: For though many Times we find *good Thoughts* injected into us we know not *how*, nor *whence*; yet, if we do but curiously observe the *Rise* of our soberest Thoughts and Purposes, we shall generally find that it is some *external* Accident or other, that occasions them. Either our *Sin* betrays us into some great *Shame* or *Infelicity*, or our wicked *Designs* are baffled by some intervening *Accident*, or some remarkable *Judgment* meets us, as the *Angel* did *Balaam*, in the Road of our *Folly*, and *Wickedness*, by which our *stupid* Consciences are many Times *startled* into Reflections; or by some good *Providence* we are directed to a *serious Book*, or *faithful Guide*, or link'd into some *pious Family*, or *virtuous Association*, by whose
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wise *Admonitions*, holy *Examples*, or friendly *Reproofs*, we are frequently inspired with good *Thoughts*, and *serious* Resolutions; and from these, or such like *Providences*, ordinarily spring the Beginnings of our *Reformation*. So that it is no *mean Assistance* that the Divine Providence contributes to us; but by a thousand *Arts* of Love, and *Methods* of Kindness which we take no *Notice* of, it administers to our Recovery, and serves the everlasting Interests of our *Souls*. Sometimes it *removes* Temptations from us, and keeps them at a *Distance*, while our *Lust* is *hot* and *ready* to take Fire, till it is cooled and extinguished by *sober* Counsels: Sometimes by *indiscernible Accidents* it suggests good *Thoughts* to us, and raises good *Desires* in us; and then *severds* those Accidents with such a *Train* of Events, as it knows will be most conducive to *continue* those *Thoughts*, and to *nurse* up those *Desires* into fixed and lasting *Resolutions*: In a word, it observes the *molliæ fandi tempora*, and is infinitely watchful in the *timing* its Addresses, so as to strike while the Iron is *hot*, and to interpose when we are most *apt* to be persuaded and wrought upon. If therefore, by these *Assistances* of the *divine Providence* we do *mortify* our *Lusts*, we do it by the *Spirit*; who doth to order and dispose all those *outward Events* and *Accidents*, as may be most conducive to our *Amendment*.

3. Let us consider those Aids and Assistances, which the *holy Angels* give us, who are the Agents and Ministers of the *Holy Ghost*, whom he sends forth to *succour* and *assist* us in the Discharge of our *Duty*. And hence, *Heb. i. 14*, they are said to be *ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation*: And in pursuance of this

their Ministry they are said to *pitch* their *Tents* round about those that fear God, *Psal.* xxxiv. 7. And God himself hath promised to *give his Angels Charge over them to keep them in all their Ways*, *Psal.* xci. 11. which Expressions, I confess, do immediately refer unto the *outward* and temporal Protection which good Men do receive from the *holy Angels*: But since those *blessed* and *benign* Spirits are so much concerned in *human Affairs*, we cannot but suppose that, so far as their own Ability, and the Laws of the invisible World will permit them, they are ready to succour our *Souls*, as well as *Bodies*; and to contribute to our *eternal*, as well as *temporal* Interests; especially considering that of our Saviour, *Luke* xv. 10. *that there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth*. And if they are so far concerned in our *Repentance*, as to *rejoice* in it, to be sure they will and do *promote* it; since in so doing they contribute to their own *Joy*. Now the *holy Angels*, being the Ministers of the *Divine Providence*, have great Advantages of assisting us in our *Duties*, and serving the Interests of our *Souls*; which Advantages to be sure their own *Goodness* and *Benignity* will prompt them to make the utmost Improvement of. They have many Opportunities to *present* good Objects to us, and to *remove* Temptations from us; of *disciplining* our Natures by *Prosperities* and *Afflictions*, and of *ordering* and *varying* our outward Circumstances, so as to render our *Duty* more *facile* and *easy* to us. And besides, as they are *Spirits*, they have a very *near* and *familiar* Access to our *Souls*; not that they can make any *immediate Impressions* upon our Understandings, or Wills, which is a Sphere of Light, to which no *created Spirit* can

can approach, but is under the immediate Oeconomy of the *Father of Spirits*: But yet, being *Spirits*, I conceive, they may easily insinuate themselves into our *Fancies*, and mingle with the *Spirits* and *Humours* of our Bodies; and by that Means suggest *good Thoughts* to us, and raise *holy Affections* in us. For that they can work upon our *Fancies* is apparent; else there could be neither *Diabolical*, nor *Angelical* Dreams: And if they can so act upon our *Fancies*, as to excite new *Images* and *Representations* in them, they may, by this Means, communicate new *Thoughts* to the *Understanding*; which naturally prints off from the *Fancy* all those Ideas and Images which it sets and composes. And as they can work upon our *Fancies*, so they can also upon our *Spirits* and *Humours*; else they have not the Power of *curing*, or *inflicting* a Disease: And by thus working upon our *Spirits*, they can in some Measure moderate the Violence of our *Passions*; which are nothing but the *Flowings* and *Reflowings* of the *Spirits* to and fro from the Heart: And by working upon our *Humours* they can compose us to such a *sedate* and *serious Temper*, as is most apt to receive *religious Impressions*, and to be *influenced* by the Motions of the *Holy Ghost*. These Things I doubt not, but the *blessed Angels* can do, and many Times do, though we *perceive* it not: And though possibly by the *Laws* of the World of *Spirits* they may be *restrained* from doing their *utmost* for us, that so we may still act with an uncontrouled *Freedom*, and be left under a Necessity of *constant* and *diligent* Endeavour; yet, doubtless, their *Assistance* is not wanting to us; but, as the *evil Angels* are always ready to *pervert* and *seduce* us, so the *good* are no less ready

to reform and recover us. And, since whatsoever they do for us, they do as the *Agents* and *Ministers* of the *Divine Spirits*; whatsoever we do by their Assistance, we do by the *Holy Spirit*.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, Let us consider the *internal* Motions and Operations of the *holy Angels* upon our *Souls*. For, besides all those Assurances which the *holy Spirit* vouchsafes to us by his *Word*, and his *Providence*, and his *holy Angels*; he does also very powerfully aid and help us, by his own *immediate Motions* and *Suggestions*. For, that the Ministrations of *Religion* have been always accompanied with the *internal* Operations of the *Spirit*, is evident from that *miraculous* Success that *Religion* hath found in the World: For I cannot imagine how *Christianity*, that never was beholden to *human Force* and *Power*; but, instead of that, found all the Powers of the World armed *against* it, and had so many mighty *Prejudices* to combat, before ever it could be admitted to speak with Men's *Reason*; I say, I cannot imagine, how, under such Circumstances, it could have *thrived* and *flourished* as it did, had it not been accompanied with an *invisible Power* from above. For, how did it *triumph* in its very *Infancy* over all the Power and Malice of the World, growing like the *Palm-tree* by Depression, and *conquering* in the midst of *Flames*? What wonderful *Alterations* did it make in the *Lives* and *Manners* of Men, transforming in an Instant the *Debauched* and *Dissolute* into Patterns of the strictest *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, and with its mighty Charms turning *Wolves* into *Lambs*, and *Vultures* into *Turtle-doves*? Which wondrous Effects were so very frequent, that the *Heathens* themselves took special Notice of them; which,

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as St. *Austin* tells us, made them to attribute its Success to the Power of *Magic*; thinking it impossible that it should do such Wonders, without the Assistance of some *powerful Spirit*. And, indeed, it is not to be supposed, how it should work such *strange* and *sudden Alterations* in Men, by its *external Arguments* and *Motives*, without a *divine Power* concurring with them and animating and enforcing them: And, though now that *Christianity* hath gotten such Footing in the World, and is become the Religion of *Nations*, the *divine Spirit* does not *ordinarily* work upon Men, in such a *strange* and *miraculous* Way; but proceeds in more *humane* Methods by joining in with our *Understandings*, and leading us forward by the Rules of *Reason* and *Sobriety*; so that whatsoever Aids it affords us, they work in the *same Way*, and after the *same Manner*, as if all were performed by the Strength of our *own Reason*; yet we have a *standing Promise* which extends to all Ages of *Christianity*, that to him who *improves* the Grace which he hath already, *more* Grace shall be given; that if we *work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, God will work in us *to will and to do*; and that he will give his *holy Spirit* to every one that sincerely *asks*, and *seeks* it. For, of the *Performance* of this *Promise* there are none of us all but have had many *sensible Experiences*; for how often do we find *good Thoughts* injected into our Minds we know not *how* nor *whence*? How frequently are we *seized* with *strong* and *vehement* Convictions of the Folly and Danger of our own wicked Courses, even in the *midst* of our loose *Mirth* and *Jollity*, when we are *rocked* into a deep *Security*, when we have *endeavoured* to *chace* good Thoughts from our Minds,

or to drown them in *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*? How often have we been *haunted* with their *Importunities*, till we have been *scared* by them into sober *Resolutions*? And when we have complied with them, what *Joys* and *Refreshments* have we sometimes found in the Discharge of our *Duty*, to encourage us to *Perseverance* in Well-doing? All which are *plain* and *sensible* Instances of the *internal* Operations of the *holy Spirit* upon our Souls. So that when we comply with these *inward* Motions of the *Holy Ghost*, so as to forsake those Sins which they dissuade us from, we do then *mortify the Deeds of the Body by the Spirit*.

From the Consideration of these Benefits by the *Spirit* of God, many useful *Inferences* may be deduced: And First, From hence we may discern the Necessity of their *Spirit*, to enable us to *mortify* the Deeds of the *Body*. And, indeed, considering the *Infirmity* of our Natures, and the many *Temptations* we have to encounter, how we are *habituated* to a *Sensual Life* before we are capable of exercising our *Reason*, and how much our *Wills* are biased by our *carnal Inclinations*; it is hardly to be imagined, how we should ever be able to retrieve ourselves from the Power and Dominion of our own *Lusts*, without some *supernatural* Aid and Assistance. For, though we have an *Understanding* capable of distinguishing between *Good* and *Evil*, and of discerning all those *Advantages* and *Mischiefs* that are inseparable unto *virtuous* and *vicious* Actions; though we have a *Will* that can comply with the Dictates of right Reason, and is no Ways determined and necessitated to Evil; and though we *can* do whatsoever we will: Yet, if besides those Motives which arise out of
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the *Nature* of *Virtue* and *Vice*, we had not *supernatural* Arguments to assist us, our *Inclinations* would certainly prove too strong for our *Reason*. If the *lascivious Wanton* had no other Arguments to oppose against the Temptations of *Lust*, but that it vexes him with *Impatience*, fills him with mad and ungovernable *Desires*, torments him with *Fear* and *Jealousy*, betrays him into *Sickness* and *Poverty*, and the like; How can it be expected that such *slender* Arguments should prevail against the Importunities of this *depraved Appetite*? If the *covetous Oppressor* had no other Motive to confront *his Lust* with, but that his Injustice exposes him to the Hatred of those whom he injures, and violates the Laws of Society, and consequently is destructive of the publick Good, in which his own is involved; alas! What *thin* Arguments would these be to him, in Comparison with the Temptations of a Bag of Gold? And though to these *natural* Arguments God hath added sundry *supernatural* Ones in the Revelation of the *Gospel*, such as are in *themselves* sufficient to check our most *outrageous Appetites*, and to baffle the *strongest Temptations*; Yet alas! our *Thoughts* are so squandered among this great Multiplicity of *carnal* Objects that surround us, that did not the *Divine Spirit* frequently suggest those *supernatural* Arguments to us, and by the powerful Influence of his *Grace* keep our Minds intent upon them, we should never recollect ourselves to such a *thorough Consideration* of them, as is necessary to persuade ourselves by them into a *lasting Resolution* of Amendment. So that we have very great need both of the *outward* and *inward* Grace of God; for though we can *deliberate* what is best to *chuse*, and *chuse* what we find *best* upon Deliberation; yet we are like Men stand-
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ing *in bivio*, between two contrary Roads, and are naturally indeed free to turn either to the *Right-hand* or to the *Left*; but on the *Left-hand* Way there are so many *Temptations* perpetually beckoning to us, and inviting us unto that which is *Evil*, and our brutish *Passions* and *Appetites* are so ready upon all Occasions to yield and comply with them; that we should certainly go that Way, did not the *Holy Spirit* importune us with strong Arguments to turn to the *Right-hand* Way of *Virtue* and *Goodness*.

II. We may learn from hence the Necessity of our *Concurrence* with the *Spirit*. For the *Spirit* of God works upon us in such a Way, as is most *congruous* to our *Free* and *Rational* Natures; that is, it doth not act upon us by mere *Force*, or irresistible *Power*, but addressees to our *Reason*, with Arguments and Persuasions, and so moves upon our *Wills* by the Mediation of our *Understandings*: But when he hath done all, he leaves it to our own Choice whether we will *reject*, or *embrace* his Proposals. For although I firmly believe, as no Man would be *wicked*, were he not invited by the Temptations of Sin, so no Man would be *good*, were he not solicited by the *Grace* of God; yet I see no Reason to imagine, that either the *one* or the *other* invades the Liberty of our *Wills*. The Temptations of *Sin* indeed incline us one Way, and the *Grace* of God another; but when all is done, they leave us *free* to *chuse* or *refuse*, and neither the *one* nor the *other* forces or necessitates us. And hence the *Successes* of the *Divine Grace* are in Scripture attributed to the *Disposition*, or *Indisposition* of the Subject it acts upon: So *Matth. xi. 20, 21. Then began he to upbraid the Cities wherein his mighty Works were done; woe unto thee Corazin, woe*
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unto thee *Bethsaida*; for if the mighty Works which were done in you had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, they would have repented long ago in *Sack-cloth* and *Ashes*. From whence I argue, that *that Grace* which would have converted *Tyre* and *Sidon*, was not *irresistible*; for, if it had, it would have converted *Corazin* and *Bethsaida* too: For how could they have resisted *irresistible Grace*? And why should it not have had the same Effect on the *one*, which it would have had on the *other*; had there not been something in the *one* which was not in the *other*, which did actually resist and vanquish it? And so likewise in the Parable of the Seed sown in the *High-way*, the *stony*, *thorny*, and good Ground, *Matth. xiii.* the Reason why the Seed prospered in *some*, and not in *others*, is plainly resolved into the *different Condition* of the *Soil*; for as for those that either considered not *at all*, or not *enough*, the Seed of the Divine Grace proved altogether *ineffectual* to them; but as for those who had so *thoroughly* considered its Proposals, as to form in their Minds a *firm* and *settled* Judgment of them, it produced in them a most *fruitful* Spring of *Virtues* and *good Works*. Which is a plain Argument that the *Successes* of God's Grace depend upon the *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours* with it; for had it wrought *irresistibly* upon these *different* Soils, it must have had the *same Success* in *all*. And indeed it is infinitely unreasonable to expect, that God should make us good *irresistibly*, without the *free Concurrence* of our own *Will* and *Endeavours*; since by so doing he must offer *Violence* to the Frame of our Beings, and *alter* the established Course of our *Natures*; which consists in a *free Determination* of ourselves, according to the Dictates of our own Reason.

Reason. For that which is *irresistible* must *necessitate* the Subject upon which it acts ; and therefore if we are *impelled* to be *good* by a Power which we cannot *resist*, it is not in our Power to *chuse* whether we will be *good* or *no*. Wherefore though God be infinitely *desirous* of our Happiness, and ready to *contribute* whatsoever is necessary to promote it ; yet he will not effect it by *necessary* Means and Causes, but in such a Way only as is fairly consistent with the *Liberty* of our *Wills* : that is, he will not save us without *ourselves* whether we will or no ; but take our *free Consent* and *Endeavour* along with him. And having done all that is necessary to *persuade* us, he expects that we should *consider* what he saith, and upon *that*, *consent* to his gracious Proposals, and *express* this Consent in a constant Course of *holy* and *virtuous Endeavours* : and if we will not do *this*, we cannot be *saved*, unless God work a *Miracle* for us, and alters the Course of *Nature* ; which is the *great Law* by which his Providence doth govern all the Beings in the World. And this we have no Reason to expect, either from the *Goodness* of *God's Nature*, or from any *Revelation* he hath made to us : Not from the *Goodness* of his *Nature* ; for why is it not as consistent with *that* to govern us as free Agents, as to *make* us such ? Not from any *Revelation* of his Will ; for that indispensably exacts our free *Concurrence* with his *Grace*, and *Assistance*, and requires us to make ourselves a *new Heart*, to *cleans*e ourselves from all *Filthiness* of the *Flesh and Spirit*, and to *work out our own Salvation* with *Fear and Trembling*. It is true, God is also said to *work in us* to *will* and to *do*, to *create in us* a *new Heart*, and to *create us in Jesus Christ* unto good Works :
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Which seemingly repugnant Expressions can be no otherwise reconciled, but by supposing *God* and *Man* to be *joint Causes* contributing to the same *Effect*; so that where *God* speaks as if He did all, we must suppose the *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours*; and where he speaks as if We were to do all, we must suppose the *Concurrence* of *his* own *Grace*.

III. We may be assured from hence of the Certainty of *Success* upon such a *Concurrence* of our *Endeavours* with the *Spirit* of *God*: which plainly implies the *Assistances* of the *Spirit* to be within our *Power*, as being in an inseparable *Conjunction* with our *sincere* and *faithful* *Endeavours*. And that they are so, is apparent; for as for the *outward* *Assistances* of the *Spirit*, which are the powerful *Arguments* and *Motives* of the *Gospel*, we have them always at *hand*, and may make use of them when we *please*; we have free Access to this *divine Armoury*, and may at any time furnish ourselves with *sufficient Weapons* to assail the most formidable *Temptations*: And as for the *inward* *Aids* of the blessed *Spirit*, *God* by his own free *Promise* hath inseparably entailed them upon our *honest* and *pious* *Endeavours*. Thus he hath promised to give his *Grace* to those who *humble* themselves, and to *draw nigh* unto them who *submit* themselves to him, *Jam.* iv. 6, 7, 8. and unto *every one that hath*, that is, improves what he hath, he hath promised *it shall be given* and that *he shall have Abundance*, *Matt.* xxv. 29. and to every one that *asks* sincerely and honestly, he hath promised *to give his Holy Spirit*, *Luke* xi. 13. And thus by his own free *Promise* he hath tied *his Spirit* to our *Endeavours*, so that we may have his *Assistance* when we *please*; he being confined by his own *Promise* to be ready

at our *Call*, and to come in to the Aid of our *Endeavours* whensoever we shall *need* and *ask* his Assistance. And having such a powerful *Second* engaged in our Quarrel, what Reason have we to doubt of *Success* and *Victory*? For what *Lust* is there so strong that we may not *subdue*? What *Habit* so inveterate, that we may not *conquer*? What *Temptation* so powerful that we may not *repulse*, whose Endeavours are thus *seconded* with Almighty Aids from above? For now whatsoever the *Divine Spirit* can do in us, *we* can do; because we can do that, which being done will infallibly *oblige* him to *concur* with us: And though we cannot conquer our *Lusts* in our own *single* Strength, yet we can by our Endeavours engage *him* on our *Side*, who is both *able* and *willing* to enable us to conquer them. So that if we *will*, we may be *invincible*; and there is no *Temptation* can be too *strong* for us; if we do not, by our own *Sloth* and *Cowardice*, disengage the *Almighty Spirit* from assisting us.

IV. From hence we may perceive how much Reason there is for our *continual Prayers*, and *Supplications* to God; since it is so apparent that our *Victory* over *Sin*, and consequently our *eternal Welfare*, do so much depend upon the Aids and Assistances of the *Spirit of God*; and since God is so ready to *give* his *holy Spirit* to us, whensoever we sincerely *ask* and *desire* it. Now the great *Reason* of Prayer is *Want*, and the greatest *Encouragement* to it is *Assurance* of Supply; but there is nothing in the World that we have more *need* of, and (if we faithfully seek it) nothing that we can have more *Assurance* of, than the gracious Influence of the *Holy Ghost*. We have as much Need of it, as of our daily
Bread;

Bread; because our Souls will *starve* and *famish* without it: And we have as much Assurance of it, as the sacred Word of the *God of Truth* can give us; because he hath promised it to us who can as soon cease to *be*, as to be *faithful*: And therefore, if after so much *Need* and *Encouragement*, we do neglect our *Prayers*, and turn our *Backs* upon the *Throne of Grace*; it is a plain Argument that either we are wretchedly *insensible* of our *Need* of God's Grace, or causelessly *suspicious* of the *Truth* of his Promise. And doubtless he that can pass Day after Day without putting up one *Prayer* to Heaven, than can venture himself among the infinite *Snares* and *Temptations* of this World without imploring the Divine *Aid* and *Protection*, is a very *bold* and *fool-hardy* Sinner; one that declares he regards neither *God*, nor his own *Soul*, and that he cares not what becomes of him either *here*, or *hereafter*. Methinks, did we but soberly consider how much we want God's Grace, and how *ready* He is to afford it us; we should as soon venture to rush *naked* into a Battle among Squadrons, of Swords and Spears, as to go at any Time into the World without *God*, to hazard our immortal *Souls* in the midst of such a numberless Battle of *Temptations*, without arming ourselves by *Prayer* with the Divine *Grace* and Assistance. Wherefore since we have so much *Need* and (if we seek it) so much *Assurance* too of the *Spirit* of God; let us take that excellent Counsel of the Author to the *Hebrews*, Heb. iv. 16. *Go boldly* and importunately *to the Throne of Grace*, that we may obtain *Mercy*, and find *Grace* to help us in the *Time of Need*.

V. From hence we may perceive the indispensable *Necessity* of our faithful and sincere Endeavours, in order to the *mortifying* our *Lusts*. It is a strange Principle which some Men have taken up, that if their Names are *recorded* in the eternal Roll of *Election*, they shall in time be made good by an *irresistible Grace*; and that if they are *not*, they shall *never* be good at all, though they should *endeavour* it with their utmost *Power* and *Diligence*: And so they think their best Way is to *lie still* in the Harbour and expect the Event; concluding it in vain to begin their Voyage towards Heaven, without an *irresistible* Gale from thence. A Doctrine which, I doubt, too many Men have improved to their own *everlasting Ruin*; though it hath no Foundation at all in *Reason*, and hath nothing to support itself, but a few *mistaken* Phrases of Scripture. But he that shall impartially consult the whole *Current* of God's Word, will find that the ordinary Language and Sense of it is this; that God *desires not the Death of a Sinner*, but *would have all Men to be saved*; but because he would save us in such a Way as is congruous to *free Agents*, and not by *fatal* and *necessary* Means, therefore he indispensibly exacts the Concurrence of our *Endeavours*; that we should *run the Race that is set before us*, and *strive to enter into the strait Gate*, and that *by patient Continuance in well-doing we should seek for Honour, and Glory, and Immortality*. And from any thing that God hath said to us, we have as much Reason to hope to be *nourished* without *Eating*, as to be *saved* without *Endeavour*. It is true, God hath promised by his Grace to *co-operate* with us, to *join* in with our Faculties, and *bless* our virtuous Effays; but he is by no Means ob-

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liged to *work* for us, while we sit *idle*; to *mortify* our Lusts while we *feed* and *pamper* them; or to *purify* our Minds, while we go on to *pollute* them with all the *Filthiness* of the Flesh and Spirit. No; if we would that God should *assist* us, we must do what we *can* for ourselves: We can attend upon the ordinary *Means* and *Ministries* of Salvation, we can *ponder* and *consider* the great *Motives* of our Religion, and *abstain* at least from the *outward* Acts of Sin, and *implore* the Divine Aid to prosper and succeed our Endeavours: And, if we will do but this, and what else is in our *Power*, let us then blame God, if we are not successful; and if we die in our *Sins*, let us charge his *Decrees* with our *Ruin*. But, if we will disregard the *public Ministries* of Religion, and wilfully excommunicate all *good Thoughts* from our Minds; if we will comply with every *Temptation* to sin, and refuse to crave *Assistance* from Heaven against it; we have none to blame for our *Ruin* but *ourselves*. For, God hath told us before-hand, that he will not *save* us without *ourselves*: And, therefore, he that is to go a long Journey, hath as much Reason to sit down in hope to be snatched up into the Air by a Whirlwind, and so to be carried on the Wings of it to his appointed Stage; as we have to neglect our *Endeavours* for Heaven, in Expectation to be haled and snatched up thither, by the Almighty *Pulleys* of an *irresistible* Grace. Let us not, therefore, upon this *vain Presumption* sit still any longer with our *Hands* in our Bosoms, lest we *perish* in our Sloth, and expose our own Souls to *everlasting Ruin*, by an *idle* Expectation of being *irresistibly* saved.

VI. From hence we may discern the *Possibility* of keeping the Commands of God, in that God by his *Spirit* doth so powerfully *aid* and *assist* us. For, supposing we cannot keep the Divine Law by our own *single Strength* and Power, yet it is apparent then we can do *that* which will *oblige* the *Divine Spirit* to *assist* and *enable* us to keep it; that is, we can do our *Endeavour*, which being done, entitles us to the *Promise* of Divine Grace and Assistance. And though we cannot do all *ourselves*, yet since we can do so much as will certainly oblige *God* to impower us to do the *rest*; it is already in our Power to do *all*, if we will. He that is strong enough to carry a Burthen of an Hundred Weight, but is required to carry Two, may carry *both*; supposing that by bearing as much as he *can*, he shall certainly be *enabled* to carry the *whole*. Now, God hath promised us by the Assistances of *his Grace*, whatsoever is wanting in the Power of our Nature; and therefore, if we fall short of our *Duty*, and consequently of the *Rewards* of it, we can reasonably blame no one but *ourselves*. For, though we *cannot* do all in our *own Strength*, yet, that we *do* not do all, is as much our Fault, as if we *could*; since we *may* do all through *Christ*, who would strengthen us, would we but do what we *can*. Let us, therefore, no longer cry out of the *Impossibility* of God's Commands, nor charge our Disobedience to them upon the *unavoidable Weakness* of our own Natures; since it is so plain, that our Sin is resolvable into no other Principle, but our own wretched *Wilfulness* and *Obstinacy*. But, let us betake ourselves to a *serious* and *heartty Endeavour* of doing our Master's Will; and if

when we have done all that we *can*, we should then fall short of our *Duty*, and miss the *Reward* of it; we may then with good Reason call him an *austere Master*, for imposing *tyrannical* and *impossible* Commands, and expecting to *reap where he hath not sown*.

Seventhly and *Lastly*, We may perceive from hence the *Inexcusableness* of Sinners, if they go on in their Wickedness. For God, you see, doth vouchsafe to us such *plentiful* Measures of his *Grace* and *Assistance*, that in the Strength of it we *may* mortify our Lusts if we *will*, and work out our own *eternal Salvation*: But if we will be *negligent*, and rather *chuse* to *perish* in our Sin, than take the *Pains* to subdue it by the *Grace* of God, our Folly is *inexcusable*; and no one can be charged with our *Ruin*, but *ourselves*. For what could God have done *more* for us, than he hath already done? He hath *solicited* us to forsake our Sin with the most important *Arguments* and *Motives*, tempted our *Hopes* with a Heaven of *immortal Joys*, and alarmed our *Fears* with the Horrors of an *endless* and *intolerable Damnation*; so that we cannot go on in our Sin without *leaping* over Heaven into Hell, and *wading* through an infinite Ocean of Happiness into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. He hath plainly told us, what the *Event* and *Issue* of our Folly will be; and *warned* us before-hand, that if we will be *wicked*, we must be *miserable*: So that if after *this* we do go on in our Sin, we run ourselves upon a *foreseen* Damnation, and leap into Hell with our *Eyes open*. He hath promised, that if we will seriously *attempt* our own Recovery, his *Grace* shall be *sufficient* for us, to back our *Endeavours*; and crown

them with *Success*: So that if after *this* we do persist in our Folly, we chuse *Destruction*, and rush headlong into a *Ruin* which we might easily avoid. In a word, he hath again and again suggested good *Thoughts* to our Minds, and by an importunate *Iteration* of them hath frequently *courted* us to *repent*, and *live*: So that if still we persevere in our *Impenitence*, we stop our Ears to the Addresses of *Heaven*; and do in Effect tell God, that we will not *hearken* to him, though our *Souls* are at Stake, and it is no less than an *everlasting* *Ruin* that he dissuades us from. And what *Remedy*, or *Excuse* is there for such *intolerable* *Obstinacy*? So that it is a plain Case, God hath done so *much* for us, that there is not any Thing *wanting* to our everlasting *Salvation*, but only our *own Wills*; and if we will not comply with his *Grace* and *Assistance*, he will not save us, whether we *will* or *no*. So that when *Inquisition* shall be made for the Blood of our *Souls*, the utmost we can charge God with, is this; that he did not tie up our Hands, to keep us from murdering ourselves, with the Cords of an *irresistible* *Fate*; and by his *invincible* *Power* drag us to *Heaven*, whether we would or no. But if we have so little *Regard* of *ourselves*, as to *spurn* at our own *Happiness*, it is not fit that God should *force* it upon us; and it would be a *mean* and *unreasonable* *Condescension* in him, to *prostitute* the Rewards of *Virtue* to those that wilfully refuse them. Wherefore if we *perish* in our Sin, after God hath done so *much* for us, he may fairly wash his Hands in *Innocency* over us, and charge our Blood upon our *own Heads*: And how deplorable soever our Condition proves in the future State, *God's Justice* will triumph

triumph for ever in our *Ruin*; and our own *Consciences*, in Consort with all the *Rational World*, will pronounce him to be most *just and Righteous in all his Ways*.

C H A P. V.

*Of the Eternal Reward of Mortification,
and Holiness.*

THE Apostle having declared, for our Encouragement, *Rom. viii. 13.* That *if we mortify the Deeds of the Body, we shall live*; I shall now insist upon these two Propositions:

First, That there is a State of *Everlasting Life* and *Happiness* prepared for *good Men*.

Secondly, That this their *Everlasting Happiness* depends upon their *mortifying* their Lusts.

I. That there is a State of *Everlasting Life and Happiness* prepared for *good Men*: The Truth of which I shall endeavour to prove by some *plain* and *easy* Arguments.

I. Because the *Law* of our *Natures* hath not a *sufficient* Sanction without it. That there is in us such a *Law of Nature*, by which Things and Actions are distinguished into *Good* and *Evil*, is every whit as evident, as that we have within us a Principle of *Reason*. For no Man using his *Reason* can ever think it indifferent in itself, whether we obey our *Parents*, or condemn them; whether we lie, or speak *Truth*; whether we be grateful, or disingenuous to our *Benefactors*: For between these Things there is

such an *essential Difference*, that they can never be *equal Competitors* to a *Rational Approbation*. And accordingly among all Mankind we may observe, that there are some *Vices*, which have as much the *universal Judgment of Reason* against them, as any false Conclusion in the *Mathematicks*; and some *Virtues* whose Goodness has been as *universally* acknowledged, as the Truth of any Principle in *Philosophy*. Wherefore, since God hath created us with such a *Faculty*, as doth necessarily make such a *Judgment* of Good and Evil; this *Judgment* must be *God's*, as well as the *Faculties* which made it: And that which is *God's Judgment* in us, must necessarily be a *Law* to us. God therefore having put such a *Law* into our *Natures*; we cannot but suppose, that he hath taken Care to enforce the *Observation* of it, by *rewarding* and *punishing* us, according as we *obey* or *violate* it: For without the Sanctions of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, to induce Men to observe them, *Laws* are insignificant; and that Lawgiver doth but *petition* his Subjects to obey, that doth not promise such *Rewards*, nor denounce such *Penalties*, as are *sufficient* to oblige them to it. And no *Reward* can be *sufficient* to oblige us to *obey*, that doth not abundantly *compensate* any *Loss*, or *Evil* we may sustain by our *Obedience*; no *Punishment* *sufficient* to deter us from *disobeying*, that doth not far surmount all that *Benefit* or *Pleasure* we can hope to reap from our *Disobedience*. Since therefore God hath implanted a *Law* in our *Natures*, we must either suppose, that he hath not *sufficiently* secured it by *Rewards* and *Punishments*; which is to blaspheme his *Wisdom* and *Conduct*: Or else we must acknowledge that he hath established it with such *Rewards* and *Punishments*, as
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do make it far more adviseable to *obey*, than to *transgress* it; which that he hath done in *all* Instances can never be proved, without granting the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of *another* World. For if there be no such Thing as *future Rewards* and *Punishments*, it is a Folly for any Man to concern himself about any Thing but his *present* Interest; and in Reason we ought to judge Things to be *Good* or *Evil*, only as they promote, or obstruct our *temporal* Happiness and Welfare. Now though it is certain, that in the general there is a *natural Good* accruing to us from all *virtuous* Actions, as, on the contrary, a *natural Evil* from all *vicious* ones; and it is ordinarily more conducive for our *temporal* Interests to *obey*, than to *disobey* the great Law of our *Natures*: Yet there are a World of Instances, wherein *Vice* may be more advantageous to us than *Virtue*, abstracting from the *Rewards* and *Punishments* of *another* World. It is *ordinarily* better for me to be an *honest* Man, than a *Knave*; it is more for *my Reputation*; yea, and usually for my *Profit* too; and it is more for the *publick* Good, in which my *own* is involved: But yet, *pro hic et nunc*, it may be better for me, with Respect only to *this* World, to be a *Knave*, than an *honest* Man. For, whensoever I can but cheat so *secretly* and *securely*, as not to fall under the *publick* Lash, nor to impair my *Reputation*; and I can but gain more by the Cheat, than I shall *lose* in the Damage of the Publick; it will be, doubtless, more advantageous for me, as to my *worldly* Interest, to *cheat* than to be *honest*. And, how often such fair *Opportunities* of Cozenage do occur, no Man can be insensible, that hath but the least Insight into the Affairs of the World. So that if God had not reserved

Rewards and Punishments for us in *another World*, we should not have *sufficient Motives* universally to observe that great Law of Righteousness, which he hath given us: For whensoever we could cheat, or steal *securely*, it would be highly reasonable for us to do it; because thereby we might promote our own *temporal Happiness*, which would be the *only End* we should have to pursue. And the same may be said of all *other Laws* of Nature, which without the great Motives of a *future Happiness and Misery*, could no longer induce any reasonable Man to obey them, than it is for his *temporal Interest* to do so. For suppose I can *secretly* stab, or poison a Man, whom I hate or dread, or from whose Death I may reap any considerable *Advantage*? What *should restrain* me from such a barbarous Fact? If you say, the *Law of Nature*; pray what *Reward* doth the Law of Nature propose *sufficient* to compensate the *Dissatisfaction* of my Revenge, or the *Danger* I run in suffering my Enemy to live? Or what *Punishment* doth the Law of Nature denounce, that is *sufficient* to balance the *Advantage* of a thousand or ten thousand Pounds a Year, that may accrue to me by his Death? If you say, the Law of Nature proposes to me the *Reward* of a *quiet and satisfied Mind*, if I forbear; and denounces the Punishment of a *guilty and amazed Conscience*, if I commit the Murder; I easily answer, that this *Peace*, or *Horror*, which is consequent to the Forbearance or Commission of Murder, arises from the Hope, and Dread of *future Rewards and Punishments*; which being taken away, to murder or not murder will be indifferent, as to any *Peace*, or *Horror* that will follow upon it: And this being removed, what Consideration will there be

be left *sufficient* to *restrain* me from the bloody Fact, when I have an Opportunity to act it *securely*, and am furiously spurred on to it by my own *Revenge* and *Covetousness*? So that if there be no *Rewards* and *Punishments* in *another* Life, to enforce the Commands of the Law of Nature; it is apparent, that no such *Rewards* or *Punishments* are annexed to it in *this* Life, as are *universally sufficient* to oblige Men to observe it. And is it likely, that the *All-wise Governor* of the World would ever impose a *Law* under an *insufficient Sanction*? That he would ever give out his *Commands* to his Creatures, and then leave it *indifferent* to them, whether they will *obey* him, or *no*? As he must needs have done, if in all Circumstances it be not *far better* for us to *obey* him, than to *disobey* him. And if our *Nature* is so framed, as not to be effectually persuaded to *Obedience*, without the Motives of *everlasting Rewards* and *Punishments*, it is at least *highly credible*, that there are such: Because it would be *unworthy* of God, so to frame the Nature of one of his *noblest Creatures*, as to render it incapable of being governed by him without *Falshood* and *Deceit*.

II. That there is a *future Happiness* reserved for good Men in the *other* World, is highly probable from those *Desires* and *Expectations* of it, which do so *generally* and *naturally* arise in *pure* and *virtuous* Minds. We rarely, if ever, read of any virtuous Man, of whatsoever Nation, or Religion, or Sect of Philosophers, whose Mind hath not been winged with earnest Hopes and Desires of *future Happiness*; and I know none that have ever *denied*, or *despaired* of it, but only such as have first *debauched* and
vitiating

vitiated the Principles of their own Nature. Such were the *Saducees* and *Epicureans*, Sects that had drowned all that was *humane* in them in *Sensuality* and *Voluptuousness*, and are branded upon Record for their shameful Indulgence to their own *brutish Genius*: And such are no *Standards* of Human Nature, but ought rather to be looked upon as *Monsters* of Men; and, therefore, as we do not think it *natural* to Men, to be born with six Fingers upon one Hand, though there have been many such *monstrous* and *unnatural* Births; so neither ought we to judge either of what is *natural* or *unnatural* to Men, by those *human Brutes*, who, by their perpetual Wallowing in the *Pleasures* of the *Body*, have monstrously *disfigured* their own Natures, and *dissolved* all that Reason, by which they are constituted *Men*, into a mere *sensual* Sagacity of catering for the Appetites of the *Flesh*. If we would know, therefore, what is *human* and *natural* to us, we must take our Measures from those who are *least depraved*, and are most conformable to the Laws of a *Rational Nature*; who have preserved the *natural* Subordination of their *Faculties*, and reduced their *Passions* and *Appetites* under the Empire of their *Reason*: And these are the Men whom we call *virtuous*, and, who, because they live in the Exercise of those *noble Virtues* which are proper to us *Men*, are to be looked upon as the *Standards* of Human Nature: By whom alone we can judge of what is *natural* and *unnatural* to us. Now *Virtue*, and the Desires and Hopes of *Immortality* are so near allied, that, like *Hippocrates's* Twins, they live and die together. For, though while Men live a *brutish* and *sensual* Life, their future *Hopes* are usually drowned in their present *Enjoyments*;

ments; yet, when once they recover out of this *unnatural* State, and begin to live virtuously like *reasonable* Beings, immediately they feel great Desires and Expectations of a *future Happiness*, springing up in their Minds, and arising higher and higher, proportionably as their Progress is in *Virtue* and *true Goodness*. Which is a plain Evidence that these *Hopes* and *Desires* are natural to us; and that they are interwoven by the great Creator of the Frame and Constitution of our *Souls*. Now, how can it consist with the Goodness of God, to implant such *Desires* and *Hopes* in our Natures, and then to withhold from them the only *Object* that can suit and satisfy them? As if it were a Recreation to him, to sit above in the Heavens, and behold the *Work of his Hands* spending itself in *weary Strugglings* towards him, and *gassing* all the while it continues in Being, after an Happiness it shall never enjoy? As for other Beings, we see they have no *natural* Desire in vain, the good God having so ordered Things, that there are *Objects* in Nature appportioned to all their *natural* Appetites: But if there be no State of *Happiness* reserved for good Men in the *other* World, we are by a *natural Principle* most strongly inclined to that which we can *never* attain to. As if God had purposely framed us with such Inclinations, that we might be perpetually *tormented* between those two Passions *Desire* and *Despair*, an earnest *Propension* after a future Happiness, and an utter *Incapacity* of ever enjoying it: As if *Nature* itself, whereby all *other* Beings are disposed to their *Perfection*, did serve only in *Mankind* to make them *miserable*, and, which is more considerable, as if *Virtue*, which is the *Perfection* of Nature, did

did only contribute to our *Infelicity*, by raising in us *Desires* and *Expectations*, which without a *future Happiness* must be for ever *baffled* and *disappointed*. For, if there be no future Happiness, either we *may* know it, or we may *not*; if we may *not* know it, why should we think *that* which reflects so much Dishonour upon God, *viz.* That he hath created in us Desires and Expectations, only to *mock* and *tantalize* them? But if we *may* know it, then do these Desires and Expectations seem to be created in us on Purpose to *torment* us. For, for what other End can we desire to be *eternally happy*, who are only brought forth into the Light to be e'er long extinguished, and shut up in everlasting Darkness? The Consideration of which must needs be an exceeding Torture and *Affliction* to us.

III. That there is a *future Happiness* reserved for good Men, is evident from the *Justice* and *Equity* of the Divine Providence. That God is a most *just* and *righteous* Governor, is acknowledged by all that believe there is a God, and that he *rules* and *governs* the World: And if it be so, then his *Justice* must first or last discover itself in distributing *Rewards* and *Punishments* to Men, according as they *obey*, or *violate* the Laws of his Government. For, what *Justice* can he express in governing the World, if he rules at *Random*, if he never makes any *Difference* between the Good and the Bad, but rewards and punishes his Subjects *promiscuously*, without any *Distinction* between the Loyal and Rebellious? And yet, in the *ordinary Course* of Divine Providence in *this* World, we see little or no *Distinction* made between them; but as the *wise Man* hath observed, *Eccl. ix. 2. All Things come alike to all*, so that we cannot

not know God's *Love* or *Hatred* by any Thing that is before us: Nay, many Times we see the *Wicked*, as the Psalmist describes them, flourishing *like a green Bay-tree*, Psal. xxxvii. 35. whilst the *Righteous* are sorely *oppressed* and *crushed* under the triumphal Chariots of their barbarous Enemies. So that were there no other State of Things, but what we *see* before us; it would be impossible for us, to give any tolerable Account of the *just Retributions* of the Divine Providence. For if, when we have all acted our Parts upon this *Stage* of Time, we were to *lie down* together, and *sleep* for ever in the Dust; how many Millions of *good Men* are there that have thought nothing too *dear* for God, and have not only sacrificed their *Lusts*, but their *Lives* and *Fortunes* to his Service, who would have no other Recompense for so doing, but a *miserable* Life, and a *woeful* Death, and an *obscure* and *dishonourable* Grave? And on the contrary, how many Millions of Millions of *wicked Men* are there, whose whole Lives have been nothing but one continued Act of *Rebellion* against God, who have *blasphemed* his Honour, and *affronted* his Authority, and openly *contemned* all the Laws of his Government; and yet would undergo no other *Punishment* for so doing, but only to live *prosperously*, to die *quietly*, and then to be *gloriously* enshrined in Monuments of Marble? And can we think *this*, and, at the same Time believe, that there is a *righteous Providence* which superintends the Affairs of the World? Certainly, if not to govern this *material* World, and to put Things into such a *regular Course* as may be suitable to their Natures, and the Operations for which they are designed, would argue some Defect of *Wisdom* in God; then

then doubtless, not to compensate *Virtue* and *Vice*, and adjust Things suitably to their Qualifications; but thus crossly to couple *Prosperity* with *Vice*, and *Misery* with *Virtue*, would argue him deficient both in *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, and *Justice*. And, perhaps, it would be no less expedient, with *Epicurus*, to deny all *Providence*, than to ascribe to it such *Defects*; it being less unworthy of the Divine Nature to neglect the Universe altogether, than to administer human Affairs with so much *Injustice* and *Irregularity*. So that either we must deny *Providence*, or (which is worse) deny the *Justice* of it; or believe that there is a *future State*, wherein all Things shall be adjusted, and good Men crowned with the *Rewards* of their Obedience, and the *Wicked* undergo the *Punishment* of their own Follies. For this we are sure of, that the Judge of all the World will do *righteously*; and that first or last he will distribute his *Rewards* and *Punishments*, according to the *Merit* and *Demerit* of his Subjects: And therefore, because we see he doth not ordinarily do it in *this World*, we have great Reason to conclude, that he will do it effectually in the World *to come*.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, That there is a State of *future Happiness* prepared for good Men, is evident from the *Revelation* of his Will, which God hath made to us by *Jesus Christ*. And this, I confess, is the most *concluding* Argument of all: As for the former Arguments, they render the Case so highly *probable*, that this at least must be acknowledged, that we have far more *Reason* to *believe* and *expect* a *future Happiness*, than we have to *doubt* or *despair* of it: But as for this last, it puts all out of *Question*, and leaves us no Pretence of Reason why we should

should doubt or suspect it. For *eternal Happiness* and *Salvation* is the great Blessing which our Saviour hath promised us, to encourage us to *Perseverance* in Well-doing; and in that *everlasting Gospel*, which he preached to the World, he hath in the Name of God, proposed to us a Heaven of endless Joys and Felicities, and *brought Life and Immortality to Light*. So that if he were *commissioned* from God to make this great Proposal to Mankind, we have as much *Security* of a future Happiness, as we can have of the *Truth* of God; which is the Foundation of all the *Certainty* we have, whether in Philosophy or Divinity. Now, that he was *commissioned* from God to promise what he did to us is apparent, because God himself, by sundry Voices from Heaven *declared* him to be his Ambassador to the World; and proclaimed him *his beloved Son*, in whom he was well pleased, and whom he had substituted the *Supreme Minister* of his Grace and Goodness to Mankind: And, what he declared in *Words*, he also demonstrated in *Deeds*. For when *Christ* was baptized, God sent down his *holy Spirit* upon him in a bright shining Flame, which spreading itself round his Head encircled his Brows like a Crown of Sun-beams, and remained upon him; which *glorious Appearance* answering to that *visible Glory*, by which God appeared from between the Cherubim, declared him to be the Temple of God, in whom the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*, and in which he meant to take his Residence for ever. And accordingly after this visible *Shechinah*, or *Glory* disappeared, we find most palpable and apparent Signs of the Presence of God in him; for by this it was that he cured the *Sick*, and calmed the *Seas*,
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and raised the *Dead*, and wrought all those *wondrous Works*, by which he proved his Mission from above. For so we are told, that he *went about doing Good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him*, Acts x. 38. And after all the *Miracles* that he did in his *Life*, by this Power and Presence of God that was in him, being barbarously murdered, he *rose* from the *Dead* by the same Power, and *ascended* triumphantly to *Heaven*. Of the Truth of all which we have as *clear* and *credible* Testimony, as ever was given to any Matters of Fact; the Report of them being handed down to us from those, who were *Eye* and *Ear-Witnesses*; who, in the Defence of what they testified exposed themselves to infinite *Hazards*, and at last, confirmed their Testimony with their *dearest Blood*; which is the greatest *Security* that any Witness can possibly give of his *Honesty*. For, what should move them to *testify* these Things, had they not known them to be *true*? It was apparently their *temporal* Interest to have concealed them; and their *Religion*, in which their *eternal* Interest was involved, prohibited them all wilful *Lying* under the Penalty of an endless *Damnation*: And, would any Men in their Wits have maintained a known *Imposture*, when they were assured before-hand, that all they should gain by it was to *die* for it *here*, and to be *damned* for it *hereafter*? And, if their Testimony be *true*, as we have all Manner of Reason to *believe* it is, then what they testify, doth plainly denote the Blessed *Jesus* to be the *Holy One of God*; from whom, as from his most holy Habitation, God would hereafter communicate all his Blessings to Mankind. And, if so, then we are sure of eternal Life, upon Condition
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of our *patient Continuance in Well-doing*: For whatsoever he hath promised us, he must have promised us from God; who dwelt in the sacred Temple of his Body, and from thence pronounced the *Oracles* of his Grace and Goodness, and manifested himself perpetually by sundry *miraculous Effects*.

From the Consideration of our *Future Happiness*, many useful Inferences may be raised: And

I. From hence we may perceive, what an *unreasonable* thing it is for us *Christians*, immoderately to dote upon the *World*. I confess, if our *chief*, or *only* Interest were involved in *this World*, and we had no *Hopes* beyond the *Grave*; there were then some *Excuse* to be made for *immoderate* Sollicitude about the trifling Concerns of this *present Life*: But when it is so apparent, that we are born to *higher Hopes*, and are here but *Candidates*, and *Probationers* for an everlasting Preferment in the highest *Heavens*; methinks, the Sense of it should make us blush at our own *Follies*, to think how *busy* we are in pursuing the fading *Vanities* of *this World*, whilst the great Interest of our *Eternity* is wholly *neglected* and *forgotten*. Blessed God! Who would imagine, that in a World peopled with *immortal Spirits*, that must live for ever in unconceivable *Happiness* or *Misery*, the greatest Number of us should be such utter *Strangers* to the Thoughts, and Concerns of *another World*? That we, who are so *industrious* in our *temporal* Affairs, as not to slip any Opportunity of *Gain*; but are so ready to court every Occasion that tends to advance these our *momentary* Pleasures, Profits, and Honours; should be regardless of these *celestial* Joys, which if we fall short of, we are *undone* for ever; and which, if we arrive to,

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we shall be as *happy* as all the Beatitudes of an immortal *Heaven* can make us! O inconsiderable Beings that we are! Where is the *Reason* that constitutes us *Men*, that we should chuse thus *crossly* to the Nature of Things, when there is so vast a *Disproportion* between the Objects of our Choice, between *Heaven* and *Earth*, between *Moments* and *Eternity*, between the *hungry* and *withering* Joys of *this* World, and the *eternally ravishing* Pleasures of the World to *come*? Methinks, if we had any Dram of *Reason* left in us, the Consideration that we are born to an *immortal* Crown, which nothing but our own *Folly* can disseize us of, were enough to inspire us with a noble *Disdain* of all these bewitching *Vanities* about us; and to make us look upon them as Things *beneath* us, Toys and Trifles, not worthy our scrambling for. When we consider, that there is an *Heaven* of *endless* Joys prepared for us, which if we will, we may make as sure of, as we can of our own *Beings*; methinks, so *vast* an *Hope* should raise our groveling Thoughts so high above this World, that when we look down upon it, it should disappear, or look like a thin blue Landskip next to *nothing*; and all the *Hurries* and *Scramblings* of silly Mortals for little Parcels of Earth, should seem as *trifling* and *inconsiderable* to us as the Toils and Labours of a little World of Ants about a Mole-hill. For how is it possible almost, that such little *Impertinencies* should take up our Thoughts, who have an *Eternity* of *Weal* and *Woe* before us? And when we have all that an *everlasting* *Heaven* means, to busy our Thoughts, and employ our Cares about, how can we engage with so much Zeal and Vigour in the *petty Affairs* of this
World?

World? Foolish and unwise that we are! Thus to neglect our most *important* Interests for every *impertinent* Trifle, to sell our *Souls* for a little Money, and give immortal *Hallelujahs* for a Song? And, when we are born to such *infinite* Hopes, to chuse *Nebuchadnezzar's* Fate, and leave *Crowns* and *Sceptres* to live among the *Savage Herds* of the Wilderness.

II. From hence we may learn, how *vigorous* and *industrious* we ought to be in discharging the Duties of our Religion. For, how can we think any *Pains* too much, when an everlasting *Heaven* is the Reward of our Labour? What a poor Thing is it, that we should grudge to spend a few *Moments* here in the *severest* Exercises of *Holiness* and *Virtue*; when within this little, little while, in Consideration of our short *Pains*, we shall have nothing else to do throughout a long and blessed *Eternity*, but to enjoy a Heaven of *pure Pleasures*, and bathe our Faculties for ever in fresh Delights; to converse with the Fountain of all *Love* and *Goodness*, and warble eternally Praises to him; and in the Vision of his *Beauty* and *Goodness*, to live in everlasting Raptures of *Joy* and *Love*? O my Soul! what though thou *toilest* and *labourest* now to climb the everlasting Hills! Yet be of good Heart, for it will not be long before thou art at the Top, where thou wilt find such *pleasant* Gales, and *glorious* Prospects as will make Thee *infinite* Amends for all: Yea, though the *Toil* thou undergoest were abundantly *more* than it is; though instead of the Labour of *mortifying* thy Lusts, and living *soberly*, *righteously*, and *godly*, thy Task were to row in the *Gallies*, or dig in the *Mines* for a Thousand Years together; yet,

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methinks,

methinks, the Consideration that Heaven will be at last thy *Reward*, should be enough to *sweeten*, and *endear* it. O would we but often represent to our Minds the *glorious* Things of *another* World, what *holy Fervours* would such charming Thoughts kindle within us? And, with how much *Spirit* and *Vigour*, would they carry us through the weary Stages of our Duty? What *Lust* is there so dear to us, that we should not *willingly* sacrifice to the Hopes of *Immortality*? What *Duty* so difficult, that we should not *cheerfully* undergo, while the Crown of *Glory* is in our Eye? Surely, did we but look more frequently to the *Recompense of Reward*, we should be all Life, and Spirit, and Wing; our *sluggish* Souls would be inspired with an Angelical *Vigour* and *Activity*; and, we should run with *Alacrity*, as well as *Patience*, the *Race that is set before us*: But alas! we look upon our *Reward* as a Thing a great Way off; and it is, I confess, reserved for us within that invisible World whereinto our dull *Sense* is not able to penetrate; which is the Reason that we are not so *vigorously* affected with it. Wherefore, to make Amends for this Disadvantage, let us often revive the Considerations of *Eternity* upon our Minds, and inculcate the *Reality* and *Certainty* of our future Weal or Woe, together with the great *Weight* and *Importance* of them: Let us thus reason with ourselves; O my Soul! If it be so certain as it is, that there are such unspeakable Joys reserved for good Men, and such intolerable Miseries for the Wicked; why should not these Things be to me, as if they were already present? Why should I not be as much afraid to sin, as if the Gates of Hell stood open before me, and I saw the astonishing Miseries of those damned Ghosts that are wel-

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tring in the Flames of it? And, why should I not as cheerfully comply with my Duty, as if I had now a full Prospect of the Regions of Happiness, and I saw the great Jesus at the Right-hand of God, with Diadems of Glory in his Hand, to crown those pure and blessed Spirits who have been his faithful Servants to the Death? And, doubtless, would we but tune our Minds a little to such Thoughts as these, they would wonderfully actuate all the Powers of our Souls, and be continually inspiring us with new Vigour in the Ways of Holiness and Virtue: For what Difficulties are there, that can daunt our good Resolutions, while they are animated with this Persuasion, that if we have our Fruit unto Holiness, our End shall be everlasting Life? Rom. vi. 22.

III. From hence we may perceive, how *upright* and *sincere* we ought to be in all our Professions and Actions. For, if there be such an *Happiness* reserved for us in Heaven, then doubtless, if we intend to partake of it, we must be *sincerely good*; because he that is the Donor of this glorious Reward, is a God that *searcheth the Heart* and *trieth the Reins*, and is a curious Observer of our *secret Thoughts* and most *retired Actions*; and consequently will *reward* us, not according to what we *seem* to be, but to what we *really are*. We may possibly cheat *Men* into a fair Opinion of us, by disguising ourselves in a *Form of Godliness*, and facing our Conversation with *specious Pretences* of Piety: But *that* God, with whom we have to do, sees through all the *Deceivings*, and *Fucuses* of Hypocrisy; and can easily discern a rotten *Core*, through the most beautiful *Rind*, that can be distended over it. So that we can never hope to obtain *his Blessing*, as *Jacob* did

his blind Father's, by a counterfeit Voice, or exterior Disguise of Religion: For all the fair Vizards of *Hypocrisy* are so far from *hiding* our Blemishes from God, that they lay them more *open* to his all-seeing Eye, and make them appear more *monstrous* and *deformed*. Wherefore, unless we are *really good*, we were better not to *seem* to be so; for mere *Pretences* of Piety will be so far from procuring *Salvation* for us, that they will but enhance and aggravate our *Condemnation*, and sink and plunge us deeper into *Hell*, instead of obtaining any Entrance for us into the Kingdom of *Heaven*. Since, therefore, there is such an *immortal Reward* prepared for us in the World to come, if we love *ourselves*, or have any Regard for our most *important* Interest, we cannot but be in *good Earnest* for Heaven; and if we are so, we shall be *sincere* and *upright* in all our Actions, and the great Design of our Lives will be to *approve* ourselves to God, and our own *Consciences*. If by giving *Alms*, we hope to encrease our Stock in that great *Bank* of Bliss above, we shall not care so much to *blow a Trumpet* when we do it, that so the World may take notice of, and praise our Bounty; but our Rejoicing will be this, that we have *approved* ourselves to God, from whom we expect the Reward of our *Obedience*. If we *abstain* from Sin, with Respect to the *future* Recompense, we shall do it in *private*, as well as in the View of the *World*; knowing that wherever we are, we are under God's Eye, who alone can make us happy, or miserable for ever. In a word, if we *seriously* mind the Glory that is set before us, we shall be as curious of our *Thoughts*, and secret *Purposes*, as if they were to be exposed upon an open Theatre; considering

dering that they are all *open* and *naked* to that God *with whom we have to do*, and upon whom the Hope of our immortal Happiness depends. For, to what Purpose should we dissemble and play the *Hypocrites*, unless we could impose upon the *Almighty*, and make Him believe that we are good, when we are not, and so *steal* to Heaven in a Vizard?

Fourthly and *Lastly*, From hence it is visible, what great Reason we have to be *cheerful* under the *Afflictions* and *Miseries* of this World; considering what *Glories* and *Felicities* there are prepared for us in the World to come. Indeed, all the *Miseries* of this World are *more or less*, as we have more or less Reason to be *supported* under them; but when we consider, that our Time here is but a *Moment*, compared with our *everlasting* Abode in the World to come, our *present* Happiness and Misery will appear to be very *inconsiderable*. We are now upon our *Journey* towards our heavenly Country, and it is no great Matter how *rough* the Way is, provided that *Heaven* be our Journey's End: For, though here we *want* many of those Accommodations which we may *expect* and *desire*; yet this is but the common Fate of *Travelers*, and we must be *contented* to take Things as we find them, and not look to have every thing just to our Mind. But all these *Difficulties* and *Inconveniences* will shortly be *over*, and after a few Days will be quite *forgotten*, and be to us as if they *never* had been: And when we are safely landed in our *own Country*, we shall look back from the Shore with *Pleasure* and *Delight* upon those boisterous Seas which we have escaped, and for ever *bless* the Storms and Winds that drove us thither. Where-

fore hold, O my *Faith* and *Patience*, a little longer, and your *Work* will soon be at an *End*; and all my *Sighs* and *Groans* within a few *Moments* will expire into everlasting *Songs* and *Hallelujahs*: Νῦν μὲν αἱ ἡμέραι ἡμῶν πονηραὶ, ἀλλὰ δὲ τιτὲς εἰσὶν ἀγαθαὶ ὥς νύξ ἔ' Δακρύησι, ἔσαι γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν ὥς αἰώνιον, καθ' αὐτὰς τῷ Φωτὶ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ δόξης. Now our *Days* are dark and gloomy, but the bright glorious *Day* is dawning, which *Night* shall never interrupt; for *God* himself is the eternal *Sun* that enlightens us with the bright *Rays* of his own *Glory*. And, what is a little cloudy *Weather*, compared with an everlasting *Sun-shine*? Doubtless, these *light Afflictions*, which are but for a *Moment*, are not worthy to be compared with the *Glory* that shall be revealed in us. Let us, therefore, comfort ourselves with these *Things*, and while we are groaning under the *Miseries* of this *Life*, let us encourage ourselves with this *Consideration*; that within a little, little while, all our *Tears* shall be wiped from our *Eyes*, and there shall be an everlasting *Period* put to all our *Sorrows* and *Miseries*; when we shall be removed from all the *Troubles* and *Temptations* of a wicked and ill-natured *World*; be past all *Storms*, and secured from all further *Danger* of *Shipwreck*; and be safely landed in the *Regions* of *Bliss* and *Immortality*. And, can we complain of the *Foulness* of a *Way*, that leads into a *Paradise* of endless *Delights*; and not cheerfully undergo these short though bitter *Throws*, which, like the *Virgin-Mother's*, will quickly end in *Songs* and everlasting *Magnificates*? Cheer up, therefore, O my crest-fallen *Soul*, for thy bitter *Passion* will soon be at an *End*; and though now thou art sailing
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in a *tempestuous Sea*, yet a few Leagues off, lies that *blessed Port*, where thou shalt be *crowned* as soon as thou art *landed*; and then the *Remembrance* of the *Storms* thou hast passed will contribute to the *Triumphs* of thy *Coronation*; and all the *bad Entertainments* thou meetest with in this Life, will but make Earth more *loathsome* to thee while thou art here, and Heaven more *welcome* when thou comest there; and these thy *light Afflictions*, which are but for a *Moment*, will work for thee a *far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Necessity of Mortification to the obtaining Eternal Life.

I Come now to the *Second Thing* proposed, namely, That the *eternal Life* and Happiness of good Men, depends upon their *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body; and that it doth so, I shall endeavour to prove,

First, From God's *Ordination* and *Appointment*.

Secondly, From the *Nature* of the Thing.

First, From God's *Ordination* and *Appointment*.

God, who is the supreme Governor of the World, hath proposed *Eternal Life*, as an Encouragement to those who by *patient Continuance in Well-doing*, seek for *Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*: And sup-

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posing that *wicked* Men could enjoy the Happiness of the other World, yet it would be inconsistent with the *Wisdom* of his Government to admit them to it. For, should he reward *Offenders* with eternal Happiness, who would be afraid of offending him? And, if once he rules with such a *slack* and *indulgent* Rein, as to take away all Reason of *Fear* from his Subjects, his *Government* must immediately dissolve into *Anarchy* and *Confusion*. And, therefore, to prevent this, he hath fairly *warned* us by his reiterated *Threats*, that if we live in *Disobedience* to his Laws, we shall be for ever *banished* from that Kingdom of *Happiness* which he hath prepared for those that *love* and *fear* him: So in *Rom. viii. 13.* we are assured, that if we live after the *Flesh* we shall die: And in *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.* we are told, that the *Works of the Flesh* are manifest, which are these, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envy, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like; of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in Times past, that they which do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God: And so 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Know ye not (says the Apostle) that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God: And to the same Purpose the same Apostle tells us, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of God, Eph. v. 5. All which dreadful Denunciations must be supposed to be conditional ;*

tional; for else they are not consistent with the Promise of *Pardon* to those that truly *repent*: So that the Meaning of them is plainly this, that if we *persevere* in these Lusts of the Flesh, and do *not mortify* them, we shall have no Part nor Portion in the Kingdom of God. Hence the Apostle exhorts us, *Col. iii. 5, 6: Mortify, therefore, your Members which are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleaness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry: For which Things sake the Wrath of God cometh on the Children of Disobedience*: Which plainly implies, that if they *did mortify* these Lusts, the Wrath of God should not come upon them; but if they *did not*, they should be liable to the divine Indignation among the Children of *Disobedience*. By all which it is apparent, that according to God's free *Ordination* and Appointment, our eternal *Happiness* and *Welfare* depends upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body; since God hath so ordained, that if we *do* mortify them, we shall *live*, and that if we *do not*, we shall be for ever *excommunicated* from the Regions of Life and Immortality.

Secondly, This is also apparent from the *Nature* of the Thing. For, if God had not excluded those that live in their Sins from eternal Life, by his own free *Ordination*; yet they must have been excluded, the *future Happiness* being so *inconsistent* with a *vicious* State, that it is impossible ever to *reconcile* them. For the Thing itself implies a *Contradiction*, and is not an Object of any *Power*, no not of *Omnipotence* itself; and God may as well make *White* to be *Black* while it is *White*, as a *vicious* Soul to be *happy* while it is *vicious*. For *Happiness* is a *relative* Thing, and doth in its own *Nature* imply a Correspondence
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and Agreement between the *Faculty* and the *Object*; and be the *Object* never so good in itself, yet if it doth not *agree* with the *Faculty* whereunto it is objected, it is *Misery* and *Affliction* to it. Though a Man should be entertained with all the delicate Relishes of *Musick*, yet if he hath not a *musical Ear*, it will be but a *tedious ungrateful* Din to him: And though his *Appetite* should be courted with all the *rich Varieties* in Nature, yet if they do not *agree* with his coarse and homely Palate, he will *dislike* and *nauseate* them. And so, if a Man should be placed in *Heaven* among all the Joys with which that *blessed State* abounds; yet, unless his *Mind* and *Temper* did *suit* and *agree* with them, they would all be so many *Miseries* and *Torments* to him; he would be afflicted even in *Abraham's Bosom*, and grope for Heaven in the midst of *Paradise*; and it would be impossible for him to be *pleased* with his Condition, till the *Genius* and *Temper* of his Mind were *altered*, and the *Dispositions* of his Soul were reconciled to that heavenly State. So that if we can demonstrate, that there is and must be *Antipathy* and *Disagreement* in *wicked Souls* to the *future Happiness*; it will then be apparent, from the *Nature* and *Reason* of the Thing, that our Enjoyment of the future Happiness depends upon our ceasing to be *wicked*; or, which is all one, upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the *Flesh*. Now to evidence this Disagreement between *wicked Souls*, and the *heavenly State*, I shall do these three Things;

First, Shew *wherein* the Felicities of the *future State* do consist.

Secondly, What the Temper and Disposition of *wicked Souls* will be in the *future State*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, How *contrary* such a Temper and Disposition must be unto such *Felicities*.

First, I am to shew *wherein* the Felicities of the *future State* do consist. And here I shall not presume to give you a particular Description of *Heaven*, the Felicities whereof the Apostle tells us are *ineffable*; but shall content myself to give you the *general* Account of it, which I find in the Revelation of the *Gospel*. In general, therefore, we may be secure of this, that *Heaven* is such an Happiness as is most suitable to a *Rational* Nature; it being designed and prepared for *reasonable* Beings, to whom (as I have shewed) it would not be a Heaven, if it were not *agreeable* to their Natures. For, should God have provided for us a Heaven of *sensual Felicities*, to gratify the unbounded Licorishness of our *carnal* Appetites, it would have been a Happiness fitter for *Beasts* than *Men*: And whilst our *sensual* and *brutish* Part had been feasted with everlasting Varieties of *carnal* Pleasures, our *intellectual* Powers, which are the *noblest* Ingredients of our Natures, must have pined away a long Eternity, for Want of those Joys and Delights, which alone are *proper* and *agreeable* to their Natures. Now our *proper* Happiness, as we are *reasonable* Beings, consists in being perfectly *Rational*, and in the *Union* of our Understandings, Wills, and Affections, with such Objects as are most agreeable to our *rational* Natures: And what is it to be perfectly *rational*, but to reason truly according to the *Nature* of Things; and to chuse and refuse, and love and hate, according to the Dictates of *true Reason*? And what is it to have our Understandings, Wills and Affections, *united* to such Objects as are most *agreeable* to our *reasonable*

sonable Natures, but only to *know* that which is most *worthy* to be known, and to *chuse* and *love* that which is most *worthy* to be chosen and loved? When therefore, our *Understandings* is become so *clear* and *vigorous*, as to *reason* aright, and penetrate into the *Natures* of Things; and our *Wills* and *Affections* are perfectly *compliant* and *harmonious* with it; and all these are in *Conjunction* with *God*, the *Fountain* of all *Truth* and *Goodness*; we are then arrived to the *heavenly* State of *reasonable* Natures. And, therefore, all that is positively affirmed of the *heavenly Happiness* in the Gospel, is only this; that it consists in our *seeing* *God*, and loving and resembling him, and being for ever associated with those *blest* *Spirits*, that see and love and resemble him as well as *We*. And this, doubtless, is such a *Felicity*, as no mortal Language can express: For, how will my *Understanding* triumph, when it is once emerged out of all the *Mists* and *Clouds*, with which it is here surrounded, into the clear Heaven of *Vision*, where it shall have a free and uninterrupted Prospect throughout the whole *Horizon* of *Truth*; when *God* and *Heaven*, and all the *Mysteries* of the other World shall be always *present* to my ravished Thoughts? How *bail* and *scund*, how *light* and *expedite* will my Soul be, when it is disentangled from all those *unreasonable Passions*, which here do clog and disease her? When all her jarring Faculties shall be reduced into a *perfect Harmony*, what a Heaven of *Content* and *Peace* will there spring up within her own Bosom? And when she is thus con-tempered to the *divine* Perfection, and inspired throughout with a *God-like* Nature, in what *Raptures* of *Love* and *Ecstasies* of *Joys* will she converse

with *God* and *blessed Spirits*? This, doubtless, if there were no more, is enough to make the *heavenly State* unspeakably *happy* and *blessed*: And this, together with a perfect Freedom from *Pains*, and *Misery*, and *Death*, is all of Heaven that God hath made known to us in his Gospel: Here we are told that we shall be made *perfect*, that we shall *see* as we are *seen*, and *know* as we are *known*, and *behold* him, that is *invisible*, Face to Face: For yet it doth not appear what we shall be, says St. *John*; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 *Epist.* iii. 2. There may be, and, doubtless are, sundry additional Felicities to these; but in these it is apparent the *main* of Heaven doth consist, because these are all that God hath plainly revealed, and made known to us.

Secondly, The next Thing proposed was to shew, what the Temper and Disposition of *wicked Souls* will be in the *future State*. And this may be easily gathered, by considering wherein a *wicked Temper* consists; For, doubtless, with the *same* Temper of Mind that we are of in *this* World, we shall go into the *other*: For, merely by going into the *other* World, Men cannot be altered as to their *main State*, though they may be perfected as to those good Dispositions that were here *begun*; so that he that is wicked *here* will be wicked *there* too, and that *same* Disposition of Mind that we carry with us to our *Graves*, we shall retain with us in *Eternity*. If, therefore, we would know what the Temper of a *wicked Soul* will be in the *future State*, our best Way will be to enquire, what it is that we call a *wicked Temper* here? Because it will be the *same* here, and hereafter. Now a *wicked Temper* consists of two Things;
first,

first, of *Sensuality*, and *secondly*, of *Devilishness*. By *Sensuality*, I mean an *immoderate* Propension of the *Soul* to the Pleasures of the *Body*; such an *headstrong* Propension, as wholly diverts the *Soul* from all her *nobler Delights* to the *brutish Pleasures* of Intemperance, and Wantonness, and Gluttony; together with those other *Lusts* that are subservient to them; such as Fraud, and Covetousness, and Ambition, and the like: By *Devilishness*, I mean those *spiritual Wickednesses* which do not so much depend upon the *Body* as the former, but are more immediately centered in the *Soul*; such as Pride, and Malice, and Wrath, and Envy, and Hatred, and Revenge, &c. which are the Sins of the *Devil*, by which those once *glorious* and *blessed* Spirits were transformed into *Fiends* and *Furies*. These are the venomous *Ingredients* of which a *wicked Temper* is composed. If you enquire, therefore, what the Temper of a *wicked Soul* will be in the *future State*; I answer, it will be the same *there* that it is *here*; that is, it will be *sensual* and *devilish*. As for the *latter*, there can be no doubt of it; for *Devilishness* being immediately subjected in the *Soul*, cannot be supposed to be *separated* from her by her Separation from the *Body*; and may as well abide in *naked* and *separated Spirits*, as it doth in the apostate *Angels*. And as for *Sensuality*, though it cannot be supposed that a *Soul* should retain the Appetites of the *Body*, after it is *separated* from it; yet having wholly abandoned itself to *corporal Pleasures* while it was in the *Body*, it may, and doubtless will, retain a *vehement Hankering* after a Re-union with it; which is the only *Sensuality* that a *separated Soul* is capable of. For, when she comes into the World of *Spirits*, her former *accustoming*

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herself unto the Pleasures of the *Body* will have so *debauched* and *vitiating* her Appetite, that she will be *incapable* of relishing any other Pleasures, but what are *carnal* and *sensual*; which because she cannot enjoy but in the *Body*, she must needs retain an *earnest* and *vehement* Longing to be re-united to it. For having never had any former Experience of the Pleasures of *Spirits*, when she comes into the *other* World, she will find herself miserably *destitute* of all that can be *pleasant* and *delightful* to her; and because she knows, that the only Pleasures she can relish are such as are not to be enjoyed, but in Conjunction with the *Body*, therefore, all her *Appetites* and *Longings* must needs unite into one outrageous Desire of being *embodied* again, that so she may repeat these *sensual* Pleasures, and act over the *brutish* Scene a-new. Which possibly may be the Reason, why such sensual Souls have *appeared* so often in *Church-yards*, and *Charnel-houses*, Union with the *Body* being that which these wandering *Ghosts* have the most *eager* Affections to, and that they are most *loath* to be *separated* from; which makes them perpetually *hover* about, and linger after their dear Consort, the *Body*; the Impossibility of their *Reunion* with it not being able to *cure* them of their impotent *Desires*, but still they would fain be alive again. *Virgil*,

*Iterumque ad tarda reverti
Corpora: quæ lucis miseris tam dira Cupido?*

And this, I doubt not, was one great Reason of those extraordinary *Abstinencies*, and bodily *Severities* that were imposed by the *Primitive Church*; that

by this Means they might gently *wean* the Soul from the Pleasures of the *Body*, and teach it *before-hand*, to live upon the Delights of *separated* Spirits; that so it might drop into Eternity with *Ease* and *Willingness*, like ripe Fruit from the Tree; and that when it was arrived into the *other* World, it might not have its Appetite so *vitiated* with these *sensual* Delights, as to be *incapable* of relishing those *spiritual* Ones, and so be endlessly *tormented* with a fruitless Desire of *returning* to the Body again. This, therefore, from the whole, is plain and apparent, that the Temper of *wicked* Souls in the *other* World, will be much the same as it is in *this*; that is, *sensual* and *devilish*, made up of Rage, and Spite, and Malice, together with a *vehement* Longing after the deserted *Body*, in which they enjoyed the only Pleasures they were *capable* of.

And, having thus shewed you, what are the *Felicities* of the *future State*; and what the Temper of *wicked* Souls will be in the *future State*; I now proceed,

Thirdly, To shew you, how *contrary* such a Temper and Disposition must be unto such *Felicities*. And indeed *Sensuality* and *Devilishness* are the only *Indispositions* for Heaven; but *such Indispositions* they are, that if upon an *impossible* Supposition a Soul could be admitted with them into the Habitations of the *Blessed*, she would not be *able* to relish one Pleasure there, among all the Delights with which the *beatifick* State abounds: There would none be found that would please her *distempered* Palate, which, like a *feverish* Tongue, must disrelish and nauseate the sweetest Liquor, by Reason of its overflowing Gall. And, hence the Apostle exhorting his Christian *Colossians*, to be *thankful* unto God for
making

making them *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, tells them, that this was effected by God's *translating* them out of the Kingdom of *Darkness*, into the Kingdom of his own dear Son; that is, by enabling them to mortify their Lusts, and inspiring them with the Graces of the Gospel, 1 *Coloss.* xii. 13. And this will evidently appear, if we consider the *particular Felicities* of which the heavenly State consists; which (as I have shewed above) consist, First, In the *Vision* of God; Secondly, In our *Likeness* or *Resemblance* to Him; Thirdly, In the *Love* of Him; and Fourthly, In the *Society* of *pure* and *blessed* Spirits; to all which there is an utter *Antipathy* and *Disagreement* in every *sensual* and *devilish* Temper and Disposition.

I. In every *sensual* and *devilish* Mind, there is an *Antipathy* and *Contrariety* to the *Vision* of God; for the Sight of God can be pleasant unto none, but those who are in some Measure *contempered* to his Perfections, and *transformed* into his Likeness. While we are *unlike* him, and *contrary* to him, as we must needs be while we are *sensual* and *devilish*, the Sight of him would be more apt to *amaze* and *terrify*, than to *please* and *delight* us; for what *Pleasure* could a Soul take in the *Vision* of that God, whom she always *bated*, and could never endure to *think* of? Doubtless, she would be so far from being *pleased* with the Sight of him, that it would be her *Grief* and *Torment* to behold him. The Sight of his *Purity* and *Holiness* would be so far from *delighting* her, that it would but *reproach* her *lewd* and *sordid* Degeneracy from the Temper of a *pure* and *immortal* Spirit: The Vision of his *Mercy* and

Goodness would be so far from *pleasing* her, that it would but *upbraid* the horrid *Devilishness* of her own Disposition; and which Way soever she turned her Eyes, she would see nothing in God, but what did *libel* and *condemn* her own *Impurity* and *Wickedness*. And how is it possible, that such a *Sight* should ever be *pleasing* unto such a *Spectator*? Doubtless, the *Vision* of God, which is the Heaven of *Godlike* Souls; would be a Hell to *wicked* Ones; it would chase them out of Heaven, if they were in it, and cause them to fly away from before the *Glory* of it, as Bats and Owls do from the Light of the Sun, and of their own *Accords* to wrap their guilty Heads in the Shades of *eternal Darkness*, and *Despair*. For, how could they endure the Sight of that God, in whom, while they continue so *infinitely unlike* him, it is impossible they should see any thing but Causes of *Horror* and *Confusion*? For there must be in us some *Likeness* and *Resemblance* of God, to dispose us to behold him with *Pleasure* and *Delight*. For, as *Maximus Tyrius* hath well observed, the τὸ Θεῶν, the *Divine Nature*, which is not visible to the Eye of Sense, (Τὸ δὲ Θεῶν ἀόρατον ὀφθαλμοῖς, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ τῇ ψυχῇ καλλίσῳ, καὶ καθαρωτάτῳ, καὶ νεφεροτάτῳ, καὶ κεκοτάτῳ, καὶ πρεσβύτατῳ, ὁρατὸν δι' ὁμοιότητα. Diff. I.) is yet visible to that in the Soul; which is most pure, and beautiful, and sublime, and noble, in respect of a certain *Similitude* and *Cognition* that is between them. But where this *Similitude* is *wanting*, the *Vision* of God will be rather a *Hell*, than a *Heaven*: If there be no *Correspondence* between what we see in God, and what we are in ourselves, his *Glory* may *confound* and *dazzle* us; but it is impossible it should *please* us? For, what *Pleasure* can we take in seeing that

that which is so infinitely *disagreeable* to our Natures?

II. In every *sensual* and *devilish* Mind there is an utter *Indisposition* and *Contrariety* to the *Love* of God; for all *Love* is founded in *Likeness*, and doth result out of some *Harmony* and *Resemblance* that there is between the *Lover* and the *Beloved*. But what *Resemblance* can there be between a *devilish* and *carnalized* Soul, and a *good* and *holy* God? And if there be none, *Light* and *Darkness*, or *Heaven* and *Hell* may as soon agree, as They. For how can a Soul, whose Affections are drenched in *Matter*, and wedded to the *Flesh*, love the *holy God*, who is a *pure* and *spotless Spirit*? What Amity can there be in a *black* and *devilish* Nature towards the most *kind* and *benign* Being in the World? Doubtless, from such a *Contrariety* of Natures there must necessarily spring *mutual Antipathies* and *Aversations*. So that could such a Soul be admitted to the *Vision* of God, she would see nothing in him but what would *enrage* and *canker* her with *Malice* against him: The Sight of those *glorious Perfections* in him, which are so *repugnant* to her own Nature, instead of *enamouring* her, would but boil up her *Hatred* into an higher Degree of *Aversion* to him. For even here we see, it is natural to *lewd* and *wicked* Men, to picture God by the *foul* and *monstrous* Original of their own Tempers; and generally the Notion which they have of *him* is nothing but the Image of *themselves*, which *Narcissus-like* they fall in love with, because it represents what they most delight in, even their own darling and beloved *Lusts*. Which is a plain Argument that they cannot *love*

God, till they have deformed him into their *own Likeness*, and with the *Æthiopians* copied him out in the Resemblance of their own *black* and *devilish* Tempers. When, therefore, they shall see Him as *He is*, encircled about with his own Rays of *unstained* and *immaculate* Glory; the vast *Unlikeness* they will then discern between *Him* and themselves, will, doubtless, *enrage* and *sowre* their Spirits against him, and convert all their *Fondness* towards him into an utter *Antipathy* and *Aversion*: For so long as *He* continues what *He* is, and *they* what *they* are, there will be such an *irreconcilable Contrariety* between them, that they must *bate* either God or themselves, or else *love* Contraries at the same Time, which is impossible.

III. In every *sensual* and *devilish* Mind there is a strong Indisposition to their being made *like* unto God, *i. e.* there is the same Indisposition in them to their receiving the *Likeness* and *Image* of God, as there is in *one Contrary* to admit of *another*. Their *sensual* and *devilish* Dispositions will as naturally *resist* the transforming Impressions of the divine *Purity* and *Goodness*, as Fire doth *Water*, or Moisture *Drought*: For the Image of God being a *moral Perfection*, must be impressed on us by the intervening Ministry of our *Understandings*, that is, by our Sight and Vision of him; and hence the Apostle gives this Reason why *we shall be like him* when he doth appear; because *we shall see him as he is*, 1 John iii. 2. But the Sight of God, which *assimilates* us to him, must be accompanied with the *Love* of him, for it is *Love* that provokes to *Imitation*, and *Imitation* that *transforms* the Lover into the Image of the Beloved.

Beloved. For though, doubtless, the *beatifick Vision* doth work far more effectually upon *prepared* Souls in the *other* Life, than the *Knowledge* of God doth in *this*; because *here* we see, but in a *glass* darkly, whereas *there* our Vision will be unspeakably more *clear, intense, and vigorous*: Yet, I doubt not but in assimilating us to God, it works in a *moral and rational* Way; that is, by *vigorously affecting* our Wills with the Perfections of God, so as to stir us up to an *active Imitation* of them, and *efficaciously* to excite us to *transcribe* them into our own Natures; which it cannot be supposed to do, unless our Souls be in some Measure *predisposed* by Holiness and Purity to the *Love* of God, and of those glorious Perfections we shall then behold in him. For if we do not *love God*, the Sight of him will be so far from provoking us to *imitate* him, that it will *avert* us from him, and render us more *unimpressive* to the transforming Power of his Glory. It is true, this *Vision* of God will *perfect* our *Likeness* to him, if it be *begun*; because then it will have a *prepared Subject* to act upon, a Soul that is *tempered* and *disposed* to the Power of it; and to take Impression from it: But yet, it will not *create* a *Likeness* where it never *was*, but will *leave* him that is *wicked* to be *wicked still*; he being an *incapable Subject* of its benign Influences, and altogether *indisposed* to be wrought upon by it. For as the *Sun* enlightens not the inward Parts of an impervious *Dung-bill*, and hath no other Effect upon it, but only to draw out its filthy *Reeks* and *Steams*; though as soon as he lifts his Head above the Hemisphere, he immediately transforms into his own *Likeness* all that vast Space whither he can diffuse his Beams, and turns it into a Region of *Light*: Even so the

divine Glory and Beauty, which is the Object of the beatifical Vision, will never illustrate *lewd and filthy* Souls; their Temper being *impervious* unto his heavenly Irradiations, and wholly *indisposed* to be enlightned by it; but, instead of that, it will *irritate* their devilish Rage against it, and provoke them to *bark* at that Light which they cannot endure: Whereas it no sooner arises upon *well-disposed* Minds, but it will immediately *chase away* all those Reliques of *Darkness* remaining in them, and *transform* them into its own *Likeness*. But, doubtless, the Sight of the *divine Purity*, and *Goodness*, will be so far from exciting *sensual* and *devilish* Spirits to *transcribe* and *imitate* it; that it will rather inspire them with *Indignation* against it, and provoke them to *curse* and *blaspheme* the Author of it.

Fourthly and *lastly*, In every *sensual* and *devilish* Soul there is an utter *Incongruity*, and *Disagreement* to the *Society* of the Spirits of *just Men made perfect*. For, even in *this* Life we see, how *ungrateful* the *Society* of *good Men* is unto those that are *wicked*: It *spoils* them of their fulsome Mirth, and *checks* them in those Riots and Scurrilities which are the *Life* and *Piquancy* of their Conversation. So that when the *good Man* takes his Leave, they reckon themselves *delivered*, his *Presence* being a *Confinement* to their Folly and Wickedness. And as it is in *this*, so, doubtless, it will be in the *other World*: For, how is it possible there should be any *Agreement* between such *distant* and *contrary* Tempers, between such *sensual* and *malicious*, and such *pure* and *benign* Spirits? What a *Torment* would it be to a *spiteful*, and *devilish* Spirit to be confined to a *Society*

ciety that is governed by the Laws of *Love* and *Friendship*? What an *Infelicity* to a *carnalized* Soul, that nauseates all Pleasures but what are *fleshy* and *sensual*, to be shut up among those *pure* and *abstracted* Spirits, that live wholly upon the Pleasures of *Wisdom*, and *Holiness*, and *Love*? Doubtless, it would be as agreeable to a *Wolf*, to be governed by the *Ten Commandments*, and fed with Lectures of *Philosophy*; as for such a Soul to live under the Laws, and be entertained with the Delights of the *heavenly Society*. So that could these *wicked* Spirits be admitted into the Company of the *Blessed*, they would soon be *weary* of it; and, perhaps, it would be so *tedious* and *irksome* to them, that they would rather *chuse* to associate themselves with *Devils*, and *dammèd* Ghosts, than to undergo the *Torment* of a Conversation so infinitely *repugnant* to their Natures; accounting it more *eligible* to live in the dismal Clamour of hellish *Thrènes* and *Blasphemies*, than to have a tedious Din of *heavenly Praises* and *Hallelujahs* perpetually ringing in their Ears. And, indeed, considering the *bellish* Nature of a wicked Soul, how *contrary* it is to the Goodness and Purity of *Heaven*, I have sometimes been apt to think, that it will be *less miserable* in those dismal Shades, where the wretched Furies, like so many Snakes and Adders, do nothing but hiss and sting one another *for ever*; than it would be, were it admitted into the *glorious Society* of heavenly Lovers, whose whole Conversation consists in *loving* and *reloving*, and is nothing else but a perpetual Inter-course of *mutual Indearments*. For this would be an Employment, so infinitely *repugnant* to its *black* and *devilish* Disposition, that rather than endure so much

much *Outrage* and *Violence*, it would of its own accord forsake the *blessed* Abodes, to flee to *Hell* for Sanctuary from the Torment of being in *Heaven*. But this, however, we may rationally conclude, that so long as the *prevailing* Temper of our Souls is *sensual* and devilish, we are *incapable* of the Society of blessed Spirits; and, that if it were possible for us to be admitted into it, our *Condition* would be very *unhappy*, till our *Temper* was changed: So that it is a plain Case both from *God's Ordination*, and from the *Nature* of the *Thing*, that our eternal Happiness and Welfare depends upon our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body.

To offer some *Practical Inferences* from hence;

I. We may perceive how *unreasonable* it is, for any Man to presume upon going to *Heaven*, upon any Account whatsoever, without *mortifying* his Lusts. For, he that thinks to go to Heaven without *Mortification* and *Amendment*, presumes both against the *Decrees* of God and the *Nature* of Things: He believes all the *Threatnings* of the Gospel to be nothing else but so many *Bugs* and *Scare-crows*; and though God hath told him again and again, that unless he forsake his *Sins*, he shall never enter into the Kingdom of *Heaven*; yet he fondly imagines, that when it comes to the Trial, God will never be so *severe* as he pretends; but will rather *revoke* the Decree that is gone out of his Mouth, than *exclude*, out of the Paradise of endless Delights, a Soul that is infinitely *offensive* to him. As if God were so *invincibly* fond and indulgent, as that rather than excommunicate an *obstinate Rebel* from Happiness, he would chuse to *prostitute* the Honour of his *Laws* and *Governments*, and commit an *Outrage* upon

upon the *Rectitude* and *Purity* of his own Nature. For, so long as he is a *pure God*, he cannot but be displeased with *impure Souls*; and so long as he is a *wise Governor*, he cannot but be *offended* with those that trample upon his *Laws*: So that before he can admit a *wicked Soul* into Heaven, he must have extinguished all his natural Antipathy to *Sin*, and stifled his just Resentment of our wilful *Affronts* to his *Authority*. When, therefore, we can find any Reason to imagine, that God is no Enemy to *Sin*, and that he hath no Regard of his own *Authority*; then, and not till then, we may have some Pretence to presume upon going to Heaven without *Mortification* and *Amendment*. But, supposing this Hindrance were removed, and that God were so *easy* as to be induced to prefer the Happiness of a *wicked Soul* before the *Honour* of his Government and the *Purity* of his Nature; yet still there is an invincible Obstacle behind, that renders her future Felicity impossible; and that is, that it cannot be without a plain Contradiction to the *Nature* of *Things*. For, as I have shewed you already, the *Genius* and *Temper* of a wicked Soul is wholly *repugnant* to all the Felicities of the *other World*; so that if they were set before her, she would not be able to *enjoy* them, but must be forced to *pine* and *famish* amidst all that *Plenty* of Delights, there being not one Viand in all the heavenly Banquet that she could relish any Sweetness in. Wherefore, either *her Nature* must be changed, or the *Nature* of *Heaven*; for, while both continue what they are, they are *irreconcilable*: And, if God himself were so *easy* and *indulgent*, as to pass by all the *Affronts* in the *other World* which *wicked Souls* have offered him

him in *this*; yet he could not make them happy there, without creating in them a *new Heart*, or creating for them a *new Heaven*. For, it is altogether as possible for us to see without *Eyes*, or hear without *Ears*, as to enjoy Heaven without a *heavenly Disposition*. How *causelessly*, therefore, dost thou presume, that talkest of going to *Heaven*, whilst thou continuest in thy *Sin*? Alas, poor Wretch! What wouldst thou do there, if upon an *impossible* Supposition thou couldest be admitted into it? There are no *wanton Amours* among those heavenly Lovers, no Rivers of *Wine* among their Rivers of Pleasure, to gratify thy unbounded *Sensuality*; no Parasite to flatter thy *lofty Pride*, no Miseries to feed thy *meagre Envy*, no Mischiefs to tickle thy *devilish Revenge*; but all the Felicities, with which that heavenly State abounds, are such as Thou wouldst *loath* and *nauseate*, as being too *pure* and *refined* for thy depraved Appetite: So that if thou wert in Heaven, it would but be a *cooler Damnation* to thee; yea, perhaps, Hell itself would be less intolerable, than a Heaven so *incongruous* to thy Nature. And, yet how ordinary is it for *lewd* and *dissolute* Persons, to flatter themselves into *confident Hopes* of Heaven; for which, when they come to be examined, they can give no other Reason but this, that they firmly rely upon the *Merits* of their *Saviour*, who died for them, and obeyed God's Law in their Stead; and, therefore, though they have no Righteousness of *their own*, yet they doubt not, being cloathed in the white Garment of *Christ*, they shall be *pardoned* and *accepted* of God? Which is a Pretence so very *absurd* and *unreasonable*, that one would think it were impossible for any Man to be imposed upon by it,
that

that had not a Mind to deceive himself: For supposing, what is false, that Christ did obey the Law in *our Stead*, and that God doth account *us* righteous because *He* was so; yet, what would this signify to our Pardon and future Happiness, without an *inherent* Righteousness of *our own*; which is so necessary to our future Happiness, that Heaven itself cannot make us happy without it? For, if by being *cloathed* in the Robe of *Christ's Righteousness*, we could be admitted into Heaven; yet, unless we left behind us our *hellish Disposition*, we should be *miserable* Wretches under that *glorious* Garment; in which we would be only crucified, like *Jesus* in his Purple Robe, with greater Scorn and Solemnity. For, since the main of *Heaven* consists in the Perfection of *inherent* Holiness, it necessarily follows that a mere *imputable Holiness* will only entitle us to an *imputable Happiness*, that is to a mere imaginary Heaven; which, how *glorious* soever it may look at a *Distance*, will, when we come to embrace it, glide from between our Arms, and leaves us *desperate* and *miserable*. And though it is true, that Christ by his *Death* and *Passion* hath purchased for us Pardon and eternal Life; yet, it is upon this *Condition*, that we *mortify* our Lusts, and *conform* to the Rule of the *Gospel*: And, indeed, without this, *Pardon* and *eternal Life* are Words that signify nothing; for what doth a Pardon signify to one that is dying of the Stone, or Strangury? He can but *die*, if he be *not* pardoned, and *die* he must though he *be*. And, as little Advantage it would be to a *depraved* Soul, to be pardoned and absolved by God, while she hath a Disease *within* her that preys upon her Vitals, and hastens her to a *certain Ruin*:

she could have been but *miserable* in the future Life if she had *not* been pardoned; and *miserable* she must be, if she continue *wicked*, whether she be *pardoned*, or *no*. All the Advantage that such a Soul could reap from God's pardoning her, would be only to be released from those *arbitrary Punishments*, which God may inflict on her in the World to come; but if she were freed from *these*, yet, by a Necessity of *Nature* she must still be extremely *miserable*; for her own *Wickedness* would incapacitate her for *Heaven*, and kindle a perpetual *Hell* within her. So that should *Christ* have died to obtain a Pardon for those that *continue* in their Sin, he would have died to *no Purpose*: For a *wicked* Soul *cannot* be pardoned, because there is such an *inseparable* Relation between *Sin* and *Punishment*, that it is as great a Contradiction for the *one* to be without the *other*, as for a *Son* to be without a *Father*. And then though *Christ* by his *Death* hath procured *eternal Life*, yet he cannot have procured it for those that are *unreformed*; because they, if they might, yet cannot *enjoy* it, their inward *Temper* and *Disposition* being contrary to it; so that, unless *Christ* by his *Death* had altered the *Nature* of *Heaven*, and converted that *Paradise* of *pure* and *holy* Pleasures into a *Seraglio* of *brutish* and *carnal* Enjoyments, he cannot have procured it for *lewd* and *depraved* Souls. So that for any Man to presume upon *Heaven* upon any Account without *Holiness* and *Amendment*, is the most egregious Nonsense in the World: For, *Heaven* is nothing else but *Holiness* in its *Perfection*, freed from all those Incumbrances that here do perpetually clog and annoy it; so that a *Heaven* without *Holiness* is a *Heaven* without a *Heaven*, that is, a Word that signifies nothing, a
Happiness

Happiness wholly abstracted from itself. While, therefore, we flatter ourselves with the Hopes of a *future Bliss*, continuing in our *Sins*, we do but court a *painted Heaven* and woo *Happiness* in a *Picture*; but, in the mean Time, are sinking into a *true and real Hell*, where are all our *foolish Hopes* will be swallowed up *for ever*, in our woeful Experience of its *substantial Miseries*.

II. We may discern from hence the *indispensible* Necessity of *Mortification*, since it is plain we cannot be *happy* without it: So that to mortify our *Lusts* is just as necessary for us, as it is to obtain *Heaven*, and avoid *Hell*. For *Virtue* and *Vice* are the Foundation of *Heaven* and *Hell*; *Hell* is nothing but that Hemisphere of *Darkness*, in which all *Sin* and *Wickedness* move; and *Heaven* is the opposite Hemisphere of *Light*, the glorious Orb of *Holiness*, *Truth*, and *Goodness*; and in the Possession of the *one*, or the *other*, we do all of us actually instate ourselves in *this* Life. For, take *Holiness* and *Virtue* out of *Heaven*, and all its Glories will immediately be *clouded* in horrid *Darkness*, and *overcast* with the dismal Shades of *Hell*: Take *Sin* and *Wickedness* out of *Hell*, and all its Blackness of *Darkness* will vanish, and it will presently *clear* up into *Light* and *Serenity*, and *shine* out into a glorious *Heaven*. For it is not so much the *Place*, as the *State* that makes either the *one*, or the *other*; and the State of *Heaven* and *Hell* consists in perfect *Holiness* and *Wickedness*; and proportionably as we do improve in either of these, so we do approach towards *Heaven*, or *Hell*. For as *Heaven* is the Center of all that is *virtuous*, *pure*, and *holy*; and every Thing that is *good* tends thither by a *natural Sympathy*; so *Hell* is the Center of all *Im-*
piety

piety and *Wickedness*; and whatsoever is *bad* doth naturally press and sink down thither, as towards its proper *Place* and *Element*. And should not the divine Vengeance concern itself in *excluding* wicked Souls out of Heaven; yet their *own Wickedness* would do it; for that is a Place of such *inaccessible Light* and *Purity*, that nothing that is *impure* can approach it; but must of Necessity be beaten off by the *perpetual Lightnings* of its Glory, and tumbled headlong down as oft as ever it essays to climb up into it. As on the other hand, should not God by an immediate Vengeance *precipitate* wicked Souls into Hell; yet their own *Sin* and *Wickedness*, hastened by the mighty Weight of its own *Nature*, would necessarily hurry them down thither with a most *swift* and *headlong* Motion. And if this be so, then questionless, it is as necessary for us to *continue* in our Sin, as it is not to be *excluded* out of Heaven, nor *thrust down* into the Flames of Hell: And did we but *know* what is meant, doubtless, we should run away from our *Sins* in a greater Fright and Maze, than ever we did from the most *astonishing Danger*. For consider, O Man, by those *short Pleasures* with which thou treatest thy Lusts, thou excommunicatest thyself from *eternal Joy*; and wouldst thou be but so wise as to deny thyself the Pleasure of a *Moment*, thou mightst be pleased *for ever*, and Millions of *Ages* hence be rejoicing among *Angels* and *blessed Spirits*, because thou wouldst not gratify thyself with those *fulsome Delights*, which would have died away in the Enjoyment. And, is it possible thou shouldst be so besotted, as to exchange the Pleasures of an *immortal Heaven* for those of an *intemperate Draught*, to sell the Joys of *Angels* for the Embraces

braces of an *Harlot*, and pawn thy Part in *Paradise* for a little *Money*, of which ere long thou wilt have no other Use, but only to purchase six Foot of Earth, and a Winding-sheet? O most prodigious Folly! what Account canst thou give for such an *extravagant Bargain*, at the Tribunal of thy own *Reason*? But it may be, you will say; *What doth the Loss of Heaven signify, since* (as you have told us already) *if we could be admitted to it, it could be no Heaven to us? And why should we think much of losing that which we cannot enjoy?* To which I answer; It is true, you cannot enjoy it, unless you part with your *Lusts*; because *Heaven*, and *they* are *inconsistent*: But you may part with your *Lusts*, if you *will*, and being quit of *these*, you may and shall enjoy it *for ever*. Your *Sin* is the only Wall of *Separation* between you and *Heaven*; which, being once demolished, you may enter into it without any Interruption, and take *Possession* of all its Glories. So that if you think the Loss of *Heaven* will be no *Trouble* to you in the other World, because it is *such* a Heaven as your *depraved* Souls will be *averse* to, you are infinitely mistaken; for though you *will* be *averse* to it, yet your own *Consciences* will tell you, that if you *would*, you might have *conquered* that Aversion, as well as those *blessed Spirits* that do enjoy it; and that if you had done so, you might have been infinitely *happy* as well as *they*. Whereas, now you are condemned to wander *for ever* in a *woeful Eternity*, tormented with a *restless Rage*, and *hungry unsatisfied* Desire, after these *sensual Goods* you have left behind you, and to which you shall never return more; the Consideration of which will render the Loss of Heaven as *grievous* to you, as if it were a Heaven

over-flowing with *sensual* Delights, and abounding with *such* Joys, as you will then hunger after, but can never enjoy. For, how will it sting you to the Heart, when you shall thus ruminate with yourselves, as you are wandering through the infernal Shades; *Ah! besotted Fool that I am! now I see too late, that Heaven is a State wherein a Soul may be infinitely happy! look yonder, how blessed Spirits are imparadised! how they exult and triumph! how they sing and give Praise, and are rapt into Ecstasies of Love and Joy! whilst I, through my own Sensuality and Devilishness, am utterly incapable of those sublime Delights whereof their Heaven is composed; and, like a forlorn Wretch, am left for ever destitute of those sensual Pleasures, which are the only Heaven I can now enjoy.* And, therefore, as you would not spend an Eternity in such *direful* Reflections, and have those *dismal* Thoughts, like so many Vultures, preying upon you *for ever*; be persuaded to set presently upon this *great and necessary* Work of *Mortification*. For assure yourselves, God will as soon let *Hell* loose into *Heaven*, and people the Regions of *immortal Bliss* with the Inhabitants of the *Land of Darknes*; as to crown a *wicked* Soul with the glorious Reward of *eternal Life*. For, God hath reduced us to this Issue, either our *Sins*, or our *Souls* must die; and we must shake Hands with *Heaven*, or our *Lusts*: So that, unless we value *eternal Happiness* so little, as to exchange it for the *sordid* and *trifling* Pleasures of *Sin*; and unless we love our *Sins* so well, as to ransom them with the Blood of our *immortal Souls*; it concerns us speedily to shake off our *Sins* by *Repentance*: For this is an *eternal* and *immutable* Law, that if we will be *wicked*, we must be *miserable*.

III. From hence we may perceive, what is the only *true* and *solid* Foundation of our *Assurance* of Heaven, namely, our *mortifying* the Deeds of the Body; for, if *they that mortify the Deeds of the Body shall live*, then if we do, or have *mortified* them, we are sure that we are entitled to *eternal Life*. So that to be *assured* of Heaven, we need not go about to spell out our Names in the *Stars*, or to read them in the secret Volumes of *eternal Predestination*: For, if *our* Wills be but so subdued to the Will of God, that we do not live in any *wilful Violation* of his Laws; we may be as certainly persuaded of our Interest in *eternal Life*, as if one of the winged Messengers from above should come down and tell us, that he saw our *Names* enrolled in the Volumes of *Eternity*. For, besides that God hath *promised* Heaven to us upon Condition of our *Mortification*, we shall, when our *Lusts* are throughly *subdued*, feel Heaven opening itself within us, and rising up from the Center of our Souls in a *Divine* Life and *God-like* Nature: So that we shall not need to seek for Heaven *without* us, because we shall find it already come down *into* us, and transcribed into our own *Natures*. And as we *grow* in Grace from one Degree to another, so Heaven will break forth *clearer* and *clearer* upon us; and the nearer we approach to the Top of the *Hill*, the fuller View we shall have of the *Horizon*, and extended *Sky*; till at last we come to walk all along in Sight of *Heaven*, and to travel towards it in a full *View* and *Assurance* of it. But, if we *secure* ourselves of *Heaven*, before we have *mortified* our *Lusts*, we do but entertain our *Fancies* with a *golden* Dream; which, when we awake will vanish away, and leave us *desperate* and *miserable*.

nable. If, therefore, we would be *assured* of our future *Happiness*, let us not trouble ourselves with numerous *Signs* of *Grace*; nor go about to erect *Schemes* of our spiritual *Nativity*, to cast a Figure to know whether we have *Grace* or were converted *secundum artem*: But let us impartially examine, whether our *Wills* are so *subdued* to the *Will* of *God*, as universally to *chuse* what he *enjoins*, and *refuse* what he *forbids*. For, if they *are*, our *Condition* is *good*, and our *Hope* *secure*, by what *Means* or *Motives* soever it was effected; and whether they *are* or *no*, we need no *Marks* nor *Signs* to resolve us: For our *Thoughts*, and *Resolutions*, and *Intentions*, are *Signs* enough to themselves, and we need no *Marks* to know what it is that we *chuse* and *refuse*: This our *Soul* can easily discern, by that *innate Power* she hath of reflecting upon our own *Motions*, by which she doth as naturally feel her own *Deliberations* and *Volitions*, as the *Body* doth its *Hunger* and *Thirst*. It is true, indeed, *holy Dispositions*, like all other *Motions*, the *weaker* they are, and the more they are *interrupted*, by contrary *Motions* and *Inclinations*, the *less* they will be *perceived*; which is the Reason why *Beginners* in Religion cannot be so *sensible* of the *Grace* that is in them; because their *good Inclinations* are *checked* and *hindred* by the strong and vehement *Counter-Motions* of their *Lusts*: But the more their *good Inclinations* *prevail* and *free* themselves from these *contrary Inclinations*, which clog and incumber them, the more their *Souls* will be *sensible* of them. For this we find by Experience, that as we perceive our own *Motions*, the more *vigorous* they are, the more we *perceive* them; especially when they are *advised* and *deliberate*, as all

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virtuous Motives and Inclinations are. For, that a Man should be *insensible* of a Motion which he exerts *advisedly*, or not be able to *know* that he is so disposed when he is *knowingly* so disposed, implies a *Contradiction*: And, indeed, if we are not able to know when we *chuse* and *refuse*, as we should, when we *resolve* well, and *intend* aright, we cannot discern when we *do* right or wrong; but are left to a Necessity of acting at *Random*, like Travellers in the Dark, that go on at a Venture, without knowing whether they go backward, or forward. If we cannot know when we do well; it is impossible we should know *how* to do well; but must necessarily leave the Conduct of our Actions to *Chance*, and *Fortune* must determine us unto *Right*, or *Wrong*. Since, therefore, our *Soul* is not a *senseless* Machine, that hath *no Perception* of her own Motions, but is naturally *sensible* of whatsoever is transacted within her; let us no longer excuse our *Ignorance* of our own Condition, with that common Pretence, that our *Hearts* are *deceitful* and *hypocritical*: For our *Hearts* are ourselves, and if *they* are *deceitful* and *hypocritical*, we ourselves are so. And yet, I know not how it comes to pass, it passes among some Men for a great Sign of *Grace* and *Sincerity*, to complain of the *Falseness* and *Hypocrisy* of their own *Hearts*; not considering that *Men* are as their *Hearts* are, and, that if *these* are hypocritical, they *themselves* are Hypocrites. If, therefore, our Complaint be *true*, the more Shame for us: This is so far from being a Sign that we have *Grace*, that it is a plain Confession that we are *graceless Dissemblers*. If our Complaint be *false*, we falsely accuse ourselves in it; which is also so far from

being a Sign of *Grace*, that it is an Argument only of our own *extravagant Folly*. But, if we *mistake* in our Complaint, and think that to be *Hypocrisy*, which is not, we should seek to be better *informed*: And, if, when you are *so*, you *still* complain of your *Hypocrisy*, I doubt, you have too much *Reason* for it; and, if you *fear* that you are Hypocrites, I *fear* you are so too. For, why should one that *knows* what an Hypocrite is, *fear* that he is an Hypocrite; were he not *conscious* to himself, that he doth dissemble with God, and, under an open *Pre- tence* of submitting to him, *disguise* some secret Purpose of *rebelli*ng against him? Let us, therefore, lay aside all our *impertinent* Scrupulosity, and fairly examine our own Souls, whether we do submit to God without any *Reserve*, and are willing to lay down all our *beloved Lusts* at his Feet: For, whether we *are* or no, we may easily discern if we *will*. If we *are*, then are the *Foundations* of *Heaven* already laid within our own Bosoms; and, if, upon this Principle, we grow in *Grace*; and, add one Degree of *Virtue* to another, we may be sure, the *Superstructure* will go on, until the whole *Fabrick* of our Happiness is completed. For, as *Nature*, by its powerful Magick, is continually drawing every Thing unto its proper *Place*, and *Center*; so *Heaven* attracts to itself, and freely im- bosoms every thing that is *heavenly*; and thrusts off nothing but what is *unfit* for, and *heterogeneous* to it. If, therefore, our Souls be of a *pure* and *heavenly* Temper, *Heaven* is the *Center* of our Motions, and the *proper* Place whereunto we belong; and whither, at last, we shall safely arrive, in Despite of all those dismal Shades of Darkness, that would
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beat us back, and interrupt our Progress towards it: But on the contrary, if we *secure* ourselves of *Heaven*, while we are *enslaved* to any *Lusts*, we presume *unreasonably*; and embark our Hopes in a *leaky Bottom*, which in Strefs of Weather will certainly *founder* under us, and *sink* us into *utter Despair*: For, how can we hope to be admitted into *Heaven*, whilst we retain that within our own *Bosoms* which kindles *Hell*, and is the *Spring* of the *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*? This would be a *confounding* of utter *Darkness* with the *Regions of Light*, a *blending* of *Heaven* and *Hell* together.

Fourthly and *Lastly*, From hence it appears, what is the *great Design* of the Christian Religion. We may be sure, God would not have sent his *Son* into the *World*, had not the *Embassy*, upon which he was employed, been of the *highest Moment* and *Concernment* to us: And what other *End*, besides doing the *greatest Good*, could a good God propose in so *great* a *Transaction*? Surely, had we been in *Heaven*, when the *Holy One* descended thence into the *World*, though we had not known the *Particulars* of his Errand, yet we should have concluded, that, doubtless, he was employed upon some *great Design* of *Love*; to communicate, from the Almighty Father, some *mighty Blessing* to the *World*: And, accordingly we find, that though the *holy Angels* did not comprehend the *particular Intention*, and *Mystery* of Christ's Incarnation; yet, they concluded in the general, that it was intended for some *great Good* to the *World*; as is apparent by the Anthem they sung at his *Nativity*, *Glory be to God on high, on Earth Peace,*
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Good-will towards Men. Now, the greatest Expression of God's *Good-will* towards Men is, to *rescue* them from all *Iniquity*, and restore them to the *Purity*, and *Perfection* of their Natures: For, without *this*, all the Blessings of Heaven, and Earth, are not *sufficient* to make us *happy*. While our Nature is *debauched* and over-grown with unreasonable *Lusts* and *Passions*, we must be *miserable*, notwithstanding all that an Omnipotent Goodness can do for us: For, *Misery* is so essential to *Sin*, that we may as well be *Men* without being *reasonable*, as *sinful* Men, without being *miserable*. Since, therefore, the *End* of Christ's coming into the World, was to dispense God's *greatest Blessings* to Mankind; and, since the *greatest Blessing* that we can receive from God, is to be *redeemed* by his Grace from our *Iniquities*, and to be made *Partakers* of the *Divine Nature*; we may reasonably conclude, that *this* was his main *Design* in the World, and the great *End* of that everlasting *Gospel* which he revealed to it. And hence, the Name *Jesus* was given him by the Direction of an Angel, because he should *save his People from their Sins*, Matth. i. 21. And, indeed, I cannot imagine any Design whatsoever, excepting *this*, that could be worthy the *Son of God's* coming down into the World, to live such a *miserable* Life, and die such a *shameful* Death. Had it been only to save us from a *Plague*, or *War*, or *Famine*, it had been an Undertaking fit for the *lowest Angel* in the heavenly Hierarchy: But to save us from our *Sins* was an Enterprize so *great* and *good*, as *none* in Heaven, or Earth, but the *Son of God* himself, was thought *worthy* to be employed in. This, therefore, was the *Mark* of all his *Aims*, while he

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was upon Earth, the *Center* in which all his *Actions* and *Sufferings* met, to save us from our *Sins*, and to inspire us with a *divine* Life and *God-like* Nature; that thereby we might be *disposed* for the Enjoyment of *Heaven*, and made to be *meet Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. It is true, he died to procure our *Pardon* too; but, it was with Respect to a farther *End*, namely, that we might not grow *desperate* with the Sense of our *GUILTS*; but that by the Promise of *Pardon*, which he hath *purchased* for us, we might be encouraged to *repent* and *amend*. But, should he have procured a *Pardon* for our Sin, whether we had *repented* of it, or *no*; he would have only *skinned* over a Wound, which, if it be not perfectly *cured*, will rankle of its own Accord, into an incurable *Gangrene*. Christ, therefore, by the Offering of himself, is said to *purge our Consciences from dead Works, that we might serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. And the great Apostle makes the *ultimate* Intention of his giving himself for us, to be this, *that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, Tit. ii. 14. And, until his *Death* hath had *this* Effect upon us, it is not all the Merit of his *Blood*, and Virtue of his *Sacrifice*, that can *release* us from the direful *Punishments* of the other Life. For, unless he by his *Death* had so altered the *Nature* of *Sin*, as that it might be in us without being a *Plague* to us; it must necessarily, if we carry it with us into the other World, prove a perpetual *Hell* and *Torment* to us. So that it is apparent, that the *great* and *ultimate* Design of Christ, was not to *hide* our filthy Sores, but to *heal* and *cure* them: And, for this End it was, that he re-
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vealed to us the *Grace of God* from Heaven, to teach us to deny *Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, and to live *soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present World*, Tit. ii. 19. Let us not, therefore, cheat our own Souls, by thinking that the *Gospel* requires nothing of us, but only to be holy by *Proxy*, or righteous by being cloathed in the Garments of *another's Righteousness*; as if its Design was not so much to cure, as cover our filthy Sores, not to make us whole, but to make us accounted so. For, can any Man imagine, that Christ would ever have undertaken such a mighty Design, and made so great a Noise of doing something: Which, when it is all summed up is nothing but a *Notion*, and doth not at last amount unto a *Reality*? As if the great Design of his coming down from Heaven to live and die for us, was only to make a *Cloak* for our *Sins*, wherein we might appear righteous before God, without being so. But, do not deceive yourselves; it is not all the *Innocence and Obedience* of Christ's Life, nor all the *Virtue and Merit* of his Death, that can render you pure and holy in God's Eyes; unless you really are so: And, you may as well be well with another's Health, or wise with another's Wisdom, as righteous before God with the Righteousness of Christ, while you abide in your *Sins*. For, God sees you as you are; and the most glorious *Disguise* you can appear in before him, will never be able to delude his all-seeing Eye, so as to make him account you righteous when you are not: And, if it were possible for you to impose upon God, yet, unless you could also impose upon the Nature of Things, and by fancying them to be otherwise than they are, make them to be what they are, not,

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it will be to no Purpose. For, if you could be clothed in *Christ's Righteousness*, while you continue *wicked*; it would signify no more to your *Happiness*, than it would to be clothed in a most *splendid* Garment, while you were pining with *Famine*, or tortured with the *Gout* or *Strangury*. Wherefore, as we love our own *Souls*, and would not betray ourselves into an *irrecoverable* *Ruin*, let us firmly conclude with ourselves, that the great Design of our Religion is *internal Holiness* and *Righteousness*; and that without *this*, all that *Christ* hath *done* and *suffered* for us, will be so far from contributing to our *Happiness*, that it will prove an eternal Aggravation to our *Misery*; and that all that precious *Blood*, which he shed in our *Behalf*, will be so far from obtaining *Pardon* and eternal *Happiness* for us, that it will arise in *judgment* against us; and, like the innocent *Blood* of *Abel*, instead of interceding for us, will cry down *Vengeance* from Heaven upon us. For, how can we imagine, that the *pure* and *holy* *Jesus*, who hated our *Sins* more than all the *Pangs* and *Horrors* of a woeful *Death*, should all of a sudden be so *kind* to *them*, as to give them *Shelter* and *Sanctuary* within his own *meritorious* Wounds; and to make his *Blood* the Price of a general *Indulgence* to all *Impiety* and *Wickedness*, that so we might sin *securely*, and enjoy a false *Retreat* from his Authority under the Covert of his *Sacrifice*? But, be not deceived; the *holy* *Jesus* will never make himself an *unholy* *Saviour* for your Sake; and your being called by the Name of *Christ* is so far from giving you a *Privilege* to *sin*, that it lasts you under a stricter *Restraint*; and, if you *violate* it, it will expose

pose you to a *severer* Punishment than if you had been *Heathens* and *Infidels*. For, this is the great Proposal of our Religion, that *Jesus Christ* died to purchase *Pardon*, and *eternal Life*, for all that do *repent* and *amend*; but if we still go on in our *Sin*, we are at a greater *Distance* from *Pardon* and *eternal Life*, than if we never had had a *Saviour* to undertake for us.

F I N I S.





